

Ada G. De Vincentiis



Security?

or

Living in the hypnotic world of today
and pretending your life is real



IMPACT
BOOKS

Security?

or

*“Living in the hypnotic world of today
and pretending your life is real”*

by

Ada G. De Vincentiis

IMPACT BOOKS

Copyright © 2015 - Ada G. De Vincentiis

INDEX

Part I

It all starts with water

That's a lie, it all starts with "security"

It all goes on with "security"

Back Home: Copenhagen Airport Website

Daisy fortune: It works, it doesn't work?

A Custodian, A Watchman, A Warden at Every Point

Afterlife

The following week... More Stories

Grateful for the order you issue us

Suitcase Surgeons

The Grandest Theatre

Consequences

Opting Out

Doing Something

Let's Have a bit of Divergence for Fresh Air

Rational versus Irrational- Who wins?

Anarchy

Dying: Low or High?

The world which puts the cart before the horse

Update

Part II

On Terrorism

Victim of Wrong Classification

War Against Killing

Found Out Why!

At all costs?

But a Dream...

It all starts with water

The woman felt the need to warn me! “This is not a normal procedure, next time have your boarding pass with you.” I'm appalled. I need to be scolded like a child who has done wrong for buying water without a boarding pass! As if it's not enough that I am forced to donate a wad of cash to these “licensed bandits” as someone called them, that I am made to pay ten times more for something worth 15 cents! They have to register.: Who bought what.

What surprises me more is how people just see these things as “soo” normal. Their complacency. I'm appalled yet some more knowing that most people will be shrugging their shoulders and saying “Aaah, so what? You're exaggerating too much,” if I tell them what happened. The incident goes like this:

We were thirsty. (But we were thirsty at the airport. That was our mistake.) There was no dispenser to buy it from. I turned my head towards the cash of the cafe in front of our gate, only to see there was a huuge line. It would take ages for me to buy water as it was lunch time and people were ordering food. So I decided to find another shop further ahead. I strolled in brisk steps, looking around. Finally, I found a place selling water. I picked up two bottles and headed for the cash. There was nobody in line. The woman asked for my boarding pass. I said I left it with my husband at the gate and it was far to go back. The woman didn't offer to let me buy water anyway; she just turned her attention to the young Asian girl who had approached to buy a couple of snacks. The girl had her boarding pass. I had the exact amount of change for the water; so I asked the girl if she could buy the water for me, that I'd be paying her. The girl did not understand it much but said okay. Still, the cashier didn't take the water bottles I held out to her, she

just attended the girl. I waited. The girl paid her bill, but didn't walk out. She was handling her bags. I repeated my request if she could lend me her boarding pass to buy water. She did. I handed it to the other cashier as the first one had simply ignored me and gone on to attend another customer. This cashier did it, *sold me water. Without my own boarding pass!* But as I said, scolding me and teaching me the lesson that I need to carry my boarding pass with me like a good girl. *I want to shout "COME TO YOUR SENSES!" at the top of my lungs.*

It's not even alcohol, *id est* something that you are limited to buy at a duty-free. Besides, I had done even that favor to someone. Some guy whom I did not know. He was buying bottles and bottles of alcohol in front of me and the cashier said he exceeded his limit. I offered that he could put it on my boarding pass if he wished. Oh what a big crime I've committed. I admit and I repent. Do to me what you will; I am ready to take up my punishment. Is it a scolding like "Don't do it next time."? I'd say you'd better come up with a good deterrent 'cause otherwise, I'm sorry, I guess I'd be doing it again. *I want to scream "Come to your senses!" at the top of my lungs.*

That's a lie, it all starts with "security"

We're at Rome Fiumicino Airport... I requested my three-year old daughter not to pass through the metal detectors but to be hand-searched instead. They declined. Had they accepted it, I would have gone through their detectors in a mannerly way. But as they didn't let my daughter pass, "I'm not passing either," I said. And the man said "Under the circumstances, you'll need to go to the police."

My husband, as he knew my standing against these searches, had printed and taken along with him a regulation that a friend of his working for the EU had signalled. Albeit,

it doesn't explicitly say you have a right to ask for a hand-search but it says:

“4.1.1.2 Passengers shall be screened by:

(a) a hand search; or

(b) walk-through metal detection (WTMD) equipment.”

Naturally, he was the one to go have a chat with the Italian police. I am watching over our bags with my daughter. I wait and wait, he doesn't come back. “Eh,” I said to myself, “Had I known it would take so long, I would have passed. Where is this man?” He came back in 10-15 minutes. Along with a police. *A young man. Has an innocent face.*

“Soo?” I asked my husband.

“Fine,” he answered, “They're going to get your information, make photocopies of your documents and will let you pass.”

The police told me to follow him. In English. When we came to the end of the line, he asked for our (mine and my daughter's) boarding passes and my ID. Meanwhile, another man interfered. Turned out he was the head of security. He did not share the police's opinion of letting me get away with being hand-searched just out of whim. They exchanged a couple of remarks, but apparently the police has the last say. He said “Wait here” to me and went.

As the police walked away with my papers, head of security approached me. He asked if I knew Italian. I replied, “A bit.” I'm sure he knew English, but he either wasn't confident enough to speak it, in which case I'd say he shouldn't have been there occupying such a position at an international airport, or he wasn't tactful enough to talk with me in what was obviously my preferred language. Anyway, he asked why I didn't want to pass through the detectors? “Just out of curiosity.”

“I might be pregnant,” I fudged. Which I could be...

What business is it his? I wasn't going to tell this man all my philosophy that I don't believe in this "security", that it's a farce, that if money was spent on people, on making the world a better place for all instead of on these equipments and "security", there wouldn't be any need for all these in the first place. If I deemed there was a chance he could understand, I might have.

"If everybody did like you, this place would be blocked," he said. I hardly held myself from saying "That's exactly the point." Actually it wasn't that hard because he continued speaking Italian; and I didn't want to answer with my broken Italian. When a person cannot express himself properly, he looks stupid be what he's saying real smart. Besides, I didn't give a hoot about the man.

"They do it in America," I said.

"Their organization is different there."

So you set up your organization accordingly too, what do I care?

It had been some time since the police had gone. The man was now talking with my husband and didn't really want to listen to me anyway when I attempted to say something. He was just trying to explain how he was a family man, how he cared about children and let children under three pass on the side as their fontanelle might not have closed yet and the detectors could be harmful. He also mentioned that this was the first time anybody asked to be hand-searched by will in the 14 years he had been serving.

I had started wondering what the hell the police was doing all this time. If he was going through my criminal records! (As I have a long list of them ;) Anyway, finally he arrived. He gave my cards back, told a young woman to go ahead with the hand-search, wished me a good flight and left.

The woman beckoned us into a room. It was a funny patdown. These people do not know how to do patdowns as they're not used to them like in America. There, everything

is regulated. They're supposed to tell you which part they're going to touch you and so on. Of course, to me, it's a stupid procedure. But again of course, I can understand people being concerned or being taken aback when someone touches them in a place they weren't expecting.

Albeit, some find these explanations of where they're going to touch more horrifying. Especially when the search is invasive... They see it as a sexual maniac who has planned every move and then doing it while getting off on it.

Anyway, the woman touched lightly here and there, same with Lara, and stopped as if she was finished. Just when we made a move, she said "Wait a second," remembering something. She took some paper and brushed it on top of my hands. Was that for drugs or was it for something like gunpowder? How were they supposed to detect such a thing if I had those things hidden somewhere in my body, how are they to detect them if I go through the metal detector? Whatever, we were let go.

There's no more security beyond that point than before it. There just is not!

On the flight, Ayşe was talking to these people in her head. "Listen, I'm a normal human being. And I am no more of a threat to anybody than you are. In fact, you are the one holding the gun. And as you have the gun and find the right in yourself to order me around, to be searched, go ahead and search me. But don't tell me to go through a detector; which I've been doing for so long. I've had enough of it. I've had enough of you too but for now it seems impossible to get rid of you as almost all the world seems to believe in you." She was talking about governments with this "you".

"So you're the good guys and I'm the bad? Oh, I might be the bad one. Or you're 'protecting' me from the bad ones? Thank you, I'll pass it up; I don't believe in security. Especially not in the one you claim to provide."

Even though I don't have any absolute belief, *I believe more in the security of Providence.*

“I want to be touched.”

“What?”

“I want to be touched.”

They had made it to their hotel in Copenhagen. “Good,” said her husband, and started touching her. She explained. “No, not that. I was thinking I should have told them that when they asked why I didn't want to go through the detector.”

“Yeah, that's right.”

She simply couldn't understand why more people did not demand this. Why had not anyone demanded this before her? 14 years is a long time. Meaning millions of passengers. Didn't Americans come to Italy? Didn't one of them object once?

“Thing is,” Carlo explained. “Most people find it more invasive to their privacy when they search you by hand. Whereas you can just pass through a machine and be free in a moment.”

She preferred the human touch to the inhuman but her husband had a point, she had to give him that. People were complacent. They did not bother. About being bothered a bit. They saw it as the price of travel. They just wanted to go about their business, that's all. With as little hassle as possible. That was their concern. Their own comfort. Still, it was wrong. These searches.

“I thought people were innocent until proven guilty,” she said. “Yet it seems I'm always accused of a guilt and have to prove my innocence to you each and every day.

Am I a suspect? Do I look like a criminal?” This you always being the “government”, the state she was arguing with in her mind.

This time it was her husband's turn to say that she had

a point. A good one. *Yes, it is a good one indeed. Apparently, by virtue of wanting to board a plane and by setting foot on the sacred grounds of airports, we all become suspects.*

It all goes on with “security”

They went their way, did their travels. The same thing came up for the searches going on the cruise ship. Every time they went on land, they were searched getting back on board. Even though they had photo cruise passenger ID's with them. Oh, someone kills you when you're out, steals your ID and gets on the ship with it and then blows the ship up? Or you get on the ship innocently the first time, get off at the next stop and sneak a bomb onto the ship? *Could be of course.*

“You don't understand,” said Carlo. Then went on to put in his share of two cents. “It's not you, somebody else might have put something in your bag and you wouldn't notice. That's why they ask all those questions if you had your bag under your possession all the time after you packed it up.”

“Yeah, they gave up on that. I guess they realized the uselessness and it probably was too much of a work for them .:repeating the same question zillions of times. And paying someone to do that!”

They were in line to get on board while having this conversation. She always pushed her daughter to the other side from under the retractable belt stanchion. This time, she stepped aside too crawling under the belt. She couldn't bear it anymore. “I'm tired of going through these, you can search me by hand,” she said to the guard. The guard gave a puzzled look and did not attempt to search her. So she just walked to her cabin.

Then came the Copenhagen Airport. Waiting in line,

she read a sign saying it had been chosen the world's best airport. There was also a sign saying "You may ask to be searched by a security officer of the same sex. However, keep in mind this might lead to some delays." Ayşe was relieved. So she wouldn't need to fight over the hand-searching here. *Wrong assumption again.* She naively passed through the detector and told the woman officer that she wanted the baby hand-searched. The woman said, "No, she has to pass through the detector."

Ayşe was taken aback by this unexpected confrontation. "But it says you can be asked to be searched by the same sex over there on the sign," she muttered.

"There are certain cases when that can be done. If you're pregnant, if you have a severe disability... She's a perfectly healthy baby."

Indeed, she was. But what did the woman know? She could have had some sickness even though she seemed just fine outside.

As they weren't expecting a hold, they had put all their bags on the conveyer belt to pass through the x-rays. Ayşe picked them up and put them in a corner. She then returned to the crime scene. The woman said "Stay by your belongings."

"I am standing by them," replied Ayşe. She didn't want to leave them unattended either but this was a situation that needed her presence. She was left in between.

The woman, now turning back to her main job, in total authoritarian commanding voice commanded that the baby pass. If it wasn't for her husband, Ayşe would have given in at that point. There was no point in dealing with these people. You wouldn't get anywhere with them. There were people waiting in line and she didn't want to be a scene. But Carlo was not someone who gave in so quick. He insisted.

"The regulations in 2010 say you can do a hand-search."

"We know the regulations."

This was another security officer, who had intervened. He turned out to be the head security officer in charge. A fierce-looking man with a shining bald head. *Now we are making a stand. Carlo is standing his ground. He is holding Lara facing front in between his legs.*

“Can I see the regulations where it says we cannot have a hand-search?” I ask the man.

“Yes, of course,” he answers. “I’ll be giving them to you.” But he doesn’t move. Right now, he has more important business to attend to. First, he has to make sure that this calm man on the other side of the metal gate does not blow up this place.

“Can you please pass over the papers to me from my wallet?” Carlo asks me as the print-out of the EU regulation was on my side with the rest of our luggage.

I go get the wallet and pass it over to him. The woman is agitated, she’s trying to stop me, as if I’m passing a gun to my husband. As if it isn’t a piece that has been through their scanners.

Carlo grabs the piece of paper sticking out from the wallet and gives it back to me. The woman grabs the wallet from my hand.: Saying “It has to go through the machine again.” I grab it back.: Saying “Okay. Let me close it first.” She is trying to pull it back. I manage to close the zip and hand it to her. She nervously passes it out to be x-rayed again. I say with a fed up voice, “You don’t have to treat us like criminals!”

“Whew!” the woman clears away the sweat on her forehead. (Allegorically of course.) She must be relieved that the poor wallet comes out clean. Meanwhile, the shiny bald man calls someone on the phone. He speaks some gibberish - sorry, some Danish, which is equivalent to gibberish for me as I do not understand it. Finally, he lets open the manual gate on the side for Lara to pass and tells the woman to search her.

After they've gotten through the ordeal, have packed their bags and on their way.: free from hassle, Ayşe and Carlo started discussing.

“She was trembling. She searched Lara as if she was a live-bomb,” Carlo said.

“Really?” asked Ayşe in amazement. She had not taken notice as the woman had had her back turned to her.

“Yeah. She was so nervous. And she said something bad to me.”

“What did she say?”

“You are harassing your baby exposing her to this.”

“Ahh!” Ayşe exclaimed. “So they are not the ones harassing us by exposing and forcing us to this!” The woman's remark was especially funny because Lara had said “That woman caressed me.” (Sorry, she said “The woman caressed Lara”, as she still doesn't use I, keeps referring to herself in the third person singular.) That was her perception. Everybody likes Lara, so she thought the woman was caressing her too.

Carlo went on. “You know they listed the cases in which passengers could be hand-searched. I said 'In this case it's just a wish.' The man, with piercing blue-eyes, said looking directly into my eyes. 'I'm afraid I cannot grant you that wish.’”

“Then?”

“I insisted and showed him the text on the paper and said I only thought it was their duty to abide the EU law.”

“Then?”

“Then he talked to someone on the phone and let the door open.”

Ayşe went on to comment on the other absurdity of the incident. “It was just so funny the way the woman got so upset to pass the wallet through the x-ray again. As if you could have magically put a bomb in the millisecond you held it in your hand, something which was under their eyes all the time.”

“It's not about that,” replied Carlo. “Anything that passes back to the unsafe side needs to pass through again, those are the regulations.”

Yeah, like a friend's mother saying anything that has been outside the house has become contaminated, or gone rancid. Or like another friend's mother believing, if anybody touches the fridge, the fridge becomes unclean and needs to be washed inside out. So in order to avoid anyone touching it at night without her being aware, she puts water by her son's and daughter-in-law's bedside, locks the kitchen door. These people's behavior is no different than these women's. They should just prohibit any kind of movement, prohibit travel. They're fine, we're fine. It's better that way. Then we can all be safe.: Locked inside our own houses.

Sitting, Ayşe remembered the regulations the man had promised to give her. She genuinely wanted to see what was written on that certain piece of paper listing the things they were obliged to obey. *We're always told that “These are the regulations” or “That is the law”, but we never see them around in written form.* She went back to ask for it. The man was going through the luggages, he didn't seem to notice her. Of course that was not possible. He was obviously avoiding her. He avoided her even when she tried to catch his attention. Did as if she were invisible. He didn't seem to hear her either. “Sir...” “Mister...” “Hellooo...” she waved her hand. After a couple of tries, she let go. There was no point in forcing him more. She couldn't help but smile to herself thinking “I scared him!” It was funny in a way. *It was actually pitiful to see how alarmed they were of a questioning, the tiniest denial to obey their orders, let alone the slightest revolt/uprising to their authority.* She was glad that her husband had not let go. If she had let her daughter pass through the detector, she would have been

upset at having yielded. Now, she had won. Put them in their position.

Ayşe and Carlo found a playground for children to wait for their flight. Right then, an announcement was heard from the loudspeakers...

“Attention all passengers... This, is a security announcement. For security reasons and due to the risk of theft, passengers are requested not to leave their luggages and personal belongings unattended at any time. Unattended baggage will be removed by authorities. Passengers are also instructed not to carry any luggage or other items not belonging to them onto the plane. Failure to comply with these precautions may compromise your safety on board your flight.”

Ayşe ignored it at first. It was an announcement she was used to. However, it was not a one-time announcement. It kept going. She kept hearing even if not listening. Her brain was being raped.

After a while, she went out looking for water. You could drink tap water here. But it was at a distance. She strolled through the corridor of people and shops. Walking somehow always made ideas rush to her head.

“I'm going to hit my head,” she exclaimed! “What are they saying? What message are they giving with this announcement? Every luggage in here has been checked, gone through their screening. If they still feel the need to make such an announcement, it means that their security checks may not have been enough. And people do not even realize it. They don't get the message.”

On the way back, she was still more worked up. “Who writes these notices, who orders them to be beeped every 15-20 minutes?” she wondered. “It gets into your subconscious.”

Yes, they were violating our subconscious and consciousness with all these announcements. That was probably the point of it.

Then, *I saw her. The security woman. Coming across me. Oh how she had her hair done and colored, she swayed it to the side with her head. She looked so cool, so proud. The way she carried herself. Puffed up with pride. These people probably thought they were important, they had this (s)elf-importance because they were “protecting” us, being our saviors. Their “career”... Yes, they did this for work. Think of the woman, or the man... Think of their life. Getting up at dusk or in the afternoon according to their shift, wearing a uniform. Then you come and watch people going through some wired door, checking, making sure they are not terrorists. Minute after minute, hour after hour, day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year... The same thing ever over again. How does that shape one's mind? What kind of relations do these people have?*

When Ayşe was back, they discussed the ludicrousness of the announcements, and the searches a bit more with Carlo. There was another mother sitting behind them. She seemed to be listening to their conversation. When Carlo commented “We have a listener,” Ayşe was happy that she had one more person that she could infect with her ideas. Carlo remarked “She's going to tell on us to the authorities.” Yes, there was that side of it too. Ayşe smiled.

Ayşe's mind was still going on the plane. If she had openly started discussing her views, shared her real thoughts with that security officer at Fiumicino when he asked why she did not wish to go through the detector, what would he have said she wondered.

I cannot see the difference between this point and that.

It's okay if I am killed at this point, as long as I'm not killed over there. There is only a terrorist threat after that exact line that you have drawn. To me, it's an arbitrary

line. I don't know how the authorities have come up with it, perhaps they've had a divination, a prophecy, perhaps it's been calculated after rigorous analysis of all previous killings. ?? Who knows?

Why don't we keep on expanding the distance from the airport?

Seriously, why don't we pass through metal detectors the moment we walk out through the door of our house? We leave any liquids at home too please. Or you say, that is going too far? Okay then, let's say whatever we have on ourself gets registered in a database in a center. So if we try to get in any activity that might be dangerous and suspect, they would be able to pin us down right away. Ah okay, so it's not us that's the problem, it's the terrorists? Well, there won't be a place to survive for terrorists under these conditions. Incidentally, why don't we just ban all types of explosives in the first place? All guns and all types of knives? Ah, yes, that won't be fitting their agenda. That would mean they too would not be having guns and would not be able to play their favorite game of "authority and hassling," "obedience training of masses." The arms industry would suffer and may God forbid, those warlords and the like would not be able to live the life they're used to. To meet the lifestyle standards they want.

Seriously, who designs these security equipments, who produces them, who gets to fill their pockets?

Ayşe turned to her husband once again and spoke out. "People accept to be sheep because they are afraid. 'Oh, please protect us. Make us feel safe. We'll do whatever you want,' they say."

"People don't want to be blown up," remarked Carlo.

"You think I do?!" Ayşe was bewildered with such a suggestion.

"No. But you have a very high self-esteem," replied Carlo. Some would have called this ego. Ayşe didn't have any objections to either. She was pensive for a moment.

How awful it would be if something happened to one of her beloveds? She didn't even want to think of it. She had lived it once. That horrifying experience did not need repetition, not even in the imagination. Yet, her conviction had not changed. “Yes. People are sheep and the security guards are the shepherds,” she asserted.

“The lord is thy shepherd.”

Ayşe turned around to look at Carlo's face questioningly.

“God is the loving one, the one taking care of you,” explained Carlo.

“Yeah, they care so much about you. They're thy shepherd, they're the Lord,” retorted Ayşe. And that was the end of conversation.

Back at Rome Airport, luggages are going around in a belt. Unclaimed. Nobody seems to be looking for them. They are just loose items wandering around lost in the mazes of this space they are foreign to. Carlo says “There are bombs going around.”

Ayşe is contented. “I see you are getting the hang of it,” she comments.

“It is funny,” Carlo says. *It is.*

Back Home: Copenhagen Airport Website

Back at home, being curious and investigative as she is, she wanted to get information on the topic and went into the airport's website to study it. Apparently Security Service at Copenhagen Airport had been chosen “the best.” And for two consecutive years. Based on what you may ask. On a worldwide airline passenger satisfaction survey.

What are these people satisfied with??? That there is a digital display for the waiting time? That you hold your boarding pass to an electronic gate and proceed to the

control instead of showing it to a person? Yeah, they gild the pill alright.

Ah, don't underestimate these people. It's the rating of 12.8 million passengers at 410 airports. Or a total of 12.1 million passengers at 395 airports.* (Probably one is for the first year, the other for the second.)

Well... May I say I don't have much esteem for high numbers? What do these awards serve anyway?

Getting such an award is a motivation for all the staff working at the airports. Asian airports have been winning this award for years. Now, it's a European airport. It's an incentive. "Obviously, our priority is to maintain security at the highest level, but our ambition is also to offer a high level of service, meeting passengers at eye level. For this reason I am very proud that our employees have been awarded this recognition for the world's best security processing," says Thomas Woldbye, CEO of Copenhagen Airport.*

At eye level?... Nobody meets you at eye level in those places. They're always the ones at the high level, they're the ones with authority.

"Welcoming" and "efficient" were the two designations Skytrax used in both years for the security screening staff at Copenhagen Airport.* Edward Plaisted, The CEO of Skytrax talked of "meticulous" procedures put in place by the airport management at Copenhagen. To him, "Airport security is an essential and unavoidable aspect of the passenger experience."*

Why is it essential, why is it unavoidable? Why should anyone accept these as givens? Of course, we're supposed to take these for granted, so we do not question. A CEO, a big man is telling this to us, he is an authority and we believe in authority, right? Apparently the security staff at Copenhagen Airport went beyond their job and smiled, and the customers appreciated it. That's why they voted for Copenhagen.

Okay, so I'm supposed to like it if my rapist smiles at me, caresses me while he does his job. I should appreciate it of course. He could be cursing me, shouting at me or beating me, right? Be grateful girl!

“Passengers should feel welcome,” they said.

Welcome where? Are they offering us tea or coffee? Well, they had a nice playground for children. I appreciated that a lot. Thanks. But not for your searches or for the alleged “security” you supply me with.

The head of security services, Johnnie Müller took this award as something to be proud of. “It's an important acknowledgement of the commitment of all our employees,” he said. “To me that means that our passengers have **bought into** our concept in which “welcoming” and “efficient” are key words.” (Emphasis mine, to get your attention to the wording he used.)

Ah, great! He confesses that this is a concept that is “sold” to people. They do not come inherent. It's the same with all security. The concept is just sold to us. It's not real, it doesn't really serve anything.

Copenhag security was supposedly “the world's best and most friendly security process.”* They boasted with this fact. They focused “on both service and security.”*

What's the service? Being friendly I suppose.

Johnnie Müller said “We want our passengers to know that we mean it when we wish them a good trip.”

Why should they be meaning it? It's only a fake.

“Better Security- Basic Principles: Change focus from “one size fits all” to “risk based” security approach.”*

I guess we qualified as a high-risk travelling as a middle-age family with a 3 year-old baby.

Security staff increased from 326 in 2003 to 931 in 2013. Almost three times as much. In another place it said “Employees at Copenhagen Airports A/S: approx. 1,950. Employees at Security: 937.” About half of the personnel.

Then they listed operational expenditure, capital expenditure...

Millions of Euros spent on this stuff.

Ayşe had been optimistic when she said millions of Euros, she should have said billions. TSA (Transportation Security Agency) in America had an annual budget \$ 8 billion. It “served” at about 450 airports with more than 60,000 employees. (Data from <http://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/end-tsa>) She shook her head thinking the amount of money poured into this. *Money that the governments get from the public at gun-point, which they euphemistically call tax.*

* All quotations taken from Copenhagen Airports website.

Daisy fortune: It works, it doesn't work?

How many believe these searches are necessary for our safety and they work? *Not me.* Who believes that these searches are a theatrical safety show, a farce and should be abolished? *I do.* How many like me? Maybe not so little you know... Could even be as much as 10 %. *Oh, how much!* Of course, depends on the country and how people interpret security and searches, how their values are shaped in general, and how strict the searches they're usually held up to. But let me give you some examples:

People have got on board with boxcutters, and mind you, not one, three. No, the man did not mean harm. He had simply forgotten the cutters, an ordinary daily item he used for work, in his carry-on luggage and they had passed undetected through the control. It was “discovered” when he was putting his luggage in the overhead bin and the cutters fell. The flight-attendant was alarmed, she called the captain, the alarmed captain called the Port Authority Police, the alarmed PAP called the Joint Terrorism Task

Force and the FBI... They evacuated the plane, went through the searches once more and proceeded with a delay of three hours. By some luck of fortune -no, I'm sure it was not by some rational mind's decision- the man was not charged with anything!

People have entered JFK Airport by sea. No, that man did not mean harm either. He had just faced peril at sea, and ended up at the airport seeking shelter.

These are the ones that got caught even if later on. Then there are people confessing they forgot a large sushi knife they bought as a gift in Japan in their carry-on. Forget about that, there is one claiming he forgot a gun, yes a gun and got past security! He only realized it when he arrived home and opened his luggage. He himself was amazed.

Yeah, so what? The security guards are human too. It might have been a moment of distraction. Don't make a big deal out of it!

I'm not making a big deal out of it; you are the uptight chary wary saying "Ah security, my security." I'm telling you so that you know. There has been many a people with lighters and matches, pocketknives getting on the plane. No, these people did not have bad intentions either. But they might have had... So how come "we" still feel secure just because of some theatric acts?

On one side they want to confiscate wooden toys - "What?! Are you joking? How did you even dare think we'd let you take that on the plane? What if you try to strangle a passenger with that wooden snake?",

baby spoons - "What?! Are you joking? We cannot let *that* on a plane. That's metal. You want to guise it under the pretention that you're going to feed your baby with that, then you'll be stabbing someone. You cannot fool us!" or just thinking to himself "This looks like a nice silver, my baby could use that."

dull tweezers - "What?! Are you joking? I cannot let *that* on the plane. What if you are suddenly possessed and

want to pull out your neighbor's eyebrows? Oh, you didn't like the eyebrows of the pilot and were thinking of plucking his? That's worse!”

Then somebody gets a lighter on the plane, which is something on the definitely prohibited on board list. No, not even hiding it. *This, I witnessed.*

Then somebody sneaks a gun through. Through the body scanner. Not even once, five times they say. *This I read, so I cannot swear it is true, but I'm inclined to believe it.*

Then somebody is *let* on board with a barbecue set containing a big fork. *This is the story of a friend, I am certain it is true.* They bought a barbecue set in America. The night before returning to Italy, when packing, they carefully reviewed all the items and put the ones that might be deemed dangerous in the check-in luggage. However, the barbecue set was just nicely packed, in its box, standing there on its own. It doesn't occur to them what there is inside. They go to the airport. Let Mario recount the rest:

“I passed through the detector and all of a sudden alarms went off. At that moment I realized what it was. I walked over to the belt to open the set. It was just so fast, as in the movies. One rushed from one side, another rushed from the other side. I didn't realize what was going on. Two guys grabbed me by the arms and captured my hands down on the table. I said 'Okay, we're doomed.' Finally, I explained them the situation. They opened the box themselves. You should have seen the way they were all so relieved when they saw what it was. 'Aaah, it's a barbecue set, fine fine.' And they let me go. Saying 'Great man. These are the best.' Patting me on the back. In it was a huge fork to remove meat from the fire, a fork with a tooth 10 cm long. You could easily thrust that into someone and dig into his spleen. On that flight, there were people whose small gadgets were confiscated. And I could have killed anyone had I wanted to.”

Then somebody shows how you can make a bomb with the things that can be bought from the duty-free after the security control. *This I watched, didn't understand much but I'm sure you can do some sort of explosive even if not a bomb. Besides, you only need a scarf to use as a weapon. Wrap it around the neck of a hostess or a child and you've got a hostage.*

People have got into the airport with forged boarding passes, fake ID's. It's not a big deal you know? Especially now that we can print our own boarding passes... *Yeah, seriously, why do they let us?*

Want to hear the worse? They've set up red-teams to make covert tests, to see who can sneak in what past the security checkpoints. Of course these are “highly classified” information but some results leaked. They are so very bad you wouldn't want to know. Those who still would like to know may look it up from the Internet. When confronted and faced with the fact of their incompetence after an undercover federal agent passed through two layers of security, the TSA complained “Aah, but that's unfair. Those items are extremely hard to spot.”

Thankfully, the world is not swarming with people who want to and who are capable of blowing other people up. *Even though some people believe it is... And yet some others want to make you believe it is...* This security thing is a feel-good set-up for some people. Unfortunately, they have the opposite effect on people like me. I don't want you to “protect” me, hence I don't want your searches. It is all a parade.

I don't feel the need to prove and present every single case with references as I know the belief in this thing called “security” is something psychological. So as much evidence as you put in front of people will not change their minds; scholars' risk assessment and statistical analysis will not

serve anything either. Still, I'd rather try. Maybe I might persuade one person and that person might bring up others with a different mindset.

Matches, cigarette lighters, pocketknives, nail clippers are things that are constantly forgotten in the carry-ons and passed through security. I had a pocketknife that I have no idea why and how come but was never detected in the x-rays; we were so happy together, I carried it everywhere with me. Until that unfortunate day it got stolen from my bag in the car...

If authorities say "You can't do that", of course there will be someone coming up and saying "Just watch me." It's provocative to prohibit. Apart from people carrying prohibited items by mistake, there are people who have been mocking security in their own way. Coming up with creative solutions. For example, they've invented something called "Beerbelly" to sneak alcohol into football matches. A sling you wear under your shirt, looks like a belly, allowing you to carry 80 ounces of liquid. There also is a "Winerack," a bra holding 25 oz. of liquid. ("Only in America" of course, do people come up with this kind of stuff.) So it follows you can sneak whatever liquid you want into the airport unto a flight if you wish. According to The Atlantic magazine, November 2008 issue, Jeffrey Goldberg got through the inspection with two cans of Bud Light whereas his 8 oz. water in the carry-on was seized. (I checked The Atlantic to make sure it wasn't a magazine who came up with sensational stuff. Apparently, it has maintained its reputation for over a century and a half, which the Chicago Tribune described as "a gracefully aging ... 150-year-old granddaddy of periodicals") Of course there is always a risk. If you get caught... But then again, I don't know what they can do to you. As long as you're not carrying explosives... The worst you are detained a bit and miss your flight. I'd say it's worth it. For the pleasure of making fun of these clowns.

They should make everyone take off their t-shirts too,

you know?

Let alone being so senseless, so devoid of reason, rules and regulations are so inconsistent that it makes them even more unacceptable. No explanation can be made for any of the measures. Apart from paranoia... It's all empty procedures upon more empty procedures. Did it ever occur to you to think of it? They're throwing your liquids, your toothpaste etc. in the trash bin. But hey, one moment! If those liquids might be explosives, then they might be exploding at some later time or by some magic trigger? Means you don't even need to be there during the explosion. Isn't that possible? It is. It is quite possible. So why don't they just go ahead and test everything before they toss away?

Besides, you cannot take any bottle with a capacity more than a 100 ml even if 95 ml of it is empty. Okay. (Most officers are not that stupid to follow every "rule" but cases of some officers confiscating a shampoo bottle that is labeled 125 ml when only a quarter of it is full, is pretty big. Of course if the bottle does not have a label, I doubt there is any personnel that can distinguish between the 125 ml bottle from the 100 ml one. How do I know? I've passed such a bottle from at least ten airports without any discontent, that's why. Or change the label of a 125 ml to a 100 ml, I bet chances are high that you'll go through without any problem.) Anyway... However, if you get ten tubes of toothpaste each 100 ml and put them in the transparent "sin bag" to expose them, then it's fine. It's just so fine all of a sudden. *As long as you obey their word, satisfy their whims!*

Another thing someone was suggesting... There are so many chemicals, fuels and guns already inside the airport. So someone just walks in and has another throw something over the fence. *Ah, like workers throwing luggages over the fence at the airport in Italy.* It may seem difficult to do that going undetected. But as long as someone is determined, it

shouldn't be hard enough to put it into action.

“Rules” have blocked the reason of security officers so much that you have to keep on reminding them constantly, how would a toy snake, a brass belt-buckle, a knuckle-purse pose a danger to anybody? Why on earth should I or anybody be throwing those to scare anybody? They suppose you are the psychopath whereas they are the real psychopaths coming up with such scenarios. Besides, as you cannot do anything, cause anyone any harm with a toy or any of those things claimed to be “high security risk items”, you'd be facing trouble for nothing. Which no sensible person would do. These people come up with implausible scenarios to hassle you, but I doubt they have much imagination apart from stupid allegations. I mean you buy a glass bottle of anything from the dutyfree area, break it in the bathrooms, put it in your purse. There! You have a weapon. Much worse than any of the items confiscated. You're not going to tell me I'm giving ideas to terrorists, right? This was not my idea but if an ordinary person can think of it, I'm sure a terrorist can too.

These controls do nothing to stop the really determined harmful people and everything to give trouble and inconvenience to innocent people who want to go about their life. They've even confiscated grapes, grapes! On the grounds that they contained liquid! I mean a modicum of sense, please... A modicum. Nobody wants or expects more. The woman had blood sugar problems and needed something to balance in case it went down. As for the prescription drugs... They let you take them only as much as you need for the duration of the flight. Then what about delays or missing of connecting flights?

I'm no expert but from what I have read of people who seem to know a bit about these things, combining liquids to make explosives is not an easy task.: let alone on an airplane in laboratory conditions. “It requires very specific conditions and would blow up on you, scaring maybe your

neighbor but not doing anyone else any harm. Doesn't do the plane any damage," they say.

But then there are news with demonstrations of how the plane would rupture with simple liquid preparations.

The other side replies those are just for sensational news to attract attention. I've seen it happen. A small personal fight in the university got promoted to a political conflict in the news. Given this was something relatively unimportant, how do you trust any other thing they report? Who do you trust?

Can you really watch the news? Do you listen to what they say? Canned statements... Always the same verbiage... A sector based on talking talking but indeed saying nothing. Of course I exonerate the rarely found real investigative journalists. People are also impressed with Hollywood movies and forget they are movie scenarios, taking what they see on the white-screen as reality. On the other hand, cell phones can activate explosives and cell phones are not among the list of prohibited items!

Security catches: 1) The forgetful innocents. Those who accidentally forget some prohibited item -something that is deemed "dangerous" by the people higher than ourselves in the authority, who assert they know better than us, even what is for our good- in their hand-luggage. 2) Me, trying to smuggle a snake unto a plane. But sorry, they couldn't catch me. I mean I was caught on the first try. I had got the snake I had bought in India on the plane to Nepal without any problems. Whereas turning back from Nepal to India, a young girl who was hand-searching my bag was startled at seeing it and told me I couldn't take it on the plane. Naturally, I asked "Why not?"

"It's dangerous," she said.

"What's dangerous about it?" I asked. "Don't you see? It's a toy."

"It's forbidden."

"Why should it be forbidden? Where, on which list

does it say wooden toys cannot be taken unto the plane? It's not metal or anything," I said.

Upon which, she told me to ask the chef. I was relieved. After all, the chef would have a bit of brain and be someone reasonable, he'd shrug off and say "It's fine, go." Hah hah hah! The chef too told me I couldn't take it and he wouldn't give me any explanation. Told me to go and give it to check-in.

Now... As I said, this is Nepal Airport. The men at the passport control do not sit behind showcases, there is no barrier in between the booths. I just walked out. But alas! The check-in had closed. I couldn't find anybody to get a hold of my luggage. What to do? I wasn't ready to give up on the snake I liked so much just for a stupid caprice, to give in to these bird-brained authority-drunks. So what did I do? I tucked the snake in my bosom. Its tail was wriggling from below my cardigan. I took a deep breath and said all the prayers I know (not literally of course, I'm just adding a bit of suspense to the story) and stepped through the detector. It didn't blip, naturally. My husband, waiting with anxiety on the other side, was asking "What happened? What happened?"

"Walk," I said, pushing him forward. "I'll tell you later."

As we got out of sight of the men, I took the snake out with a smile of victory and tucked it in the bag I had left with my husband. As you might have guessed, I didn't hijack the plane threatening the pilot with "This snake bites so bad, beware!"

In short, security blocks all those who, basically are non-threats to anybody. Let's be fair, they would probably catch the inexpert too. Whereas I do not have much doubt that the smart ones who understand about these things can do real/serious damage without being caught.

Actually, the topic of the usefulness of security should not be a part of the discussion at all. As if what they are

doing would be fine if it was useful. *But yes of course, at least there could be a consolation then. Now, there isn't even that.*

A Custodian, A Watchman, A Warden at Every Point

Pilots claim that the lack of update of the traffic control systems is a more serious and bigger threat to security of people's lives. Others state that your chances of dying from a bee sting, snake bite, from an unexpected allergic reaction to nuts, being struck by a lightning or by drowning in your bathtub are greater than being killed in a terrorist attack in the western countries. Let me not mention car accidents at all.

Yeah, but you shouldn't compare the ordinary ways of dying by dying of a terror attack.

Dying by a bee sting is not very ordinary...

No, but if you look at it that way, just consider the statistics, your chances of dying from cancer is higher as well. Thing is, terrorism has a huge psychological impact. Clark Kent Ervin (the former inspector general of the Department of Homeland Security) has said "So what?" on the statistical approach of dying from other things. "At most, this should mean that individual Americans should go about their daily lives without being 'terrorized' by the omnipresent threat of terrorism. Amen. But, it most emphatically should not be taken to mean that our government should stop worrying all that much about terrorism and start focusing its time, energy, and money on other things."

Why not?! That's exactly how it should be taken as!

Ervin went on... "tragic as it may be, we instinctively feel less bad about someone's dying from a bee sting than about someone's dying from a terror attack. Why? Well, a

bee sting is an act of nature, not an act of man. A bee, presumably anyway, does not intend to cause the death of whomever he stings. A bee does not, presumably, have an “agenda” when he stings someone. There is no intention to affect public policy, and no intention to terrorize or otherwise discomfort anyone other than the person stung.”

That part is right of course. I have always felt the same thing. Natural disasters do not strike me as bad as man-made ones.

Economic impact too. Ervin also said comparing other ways of death to death by terrorism is not even like comparing apples and pears, “It's comparing apples and brass buttons.”

Okay, if you want to see it that way, go ahead. What more can I say? I don't agree. You die in the end. How you die is just semantics. Someone was saying “If the likelihood of being killed by a terrorist is too high for you, I don't know what you can do. Certainly you can't get on a car to go anywhere. Household accidents kill more people than terrorists too. You could try freezing yourself to be woken up in a better future, but do you have any idea how many people die in hospitals every day for things that can be prevented? So I'm sorry but I cannot guarantee that you'll be waking up.” Politicians, if they cared about their “citizens”, would have declared war upon sugar, upon fizzy drinks, upon tobacco instead of upon terrorism. They would have declared war upon cars. But no, of course none of these wars would create lucrative businesses, on the contrary, they would sabotage the ones that exist.

Wait a second, instead of putting guards on airplanes you put guards surveiling the groceries going into markets. If we need guards above us, we should put one for laziness and stupidity too. But of course a smart guard cannot be found to put for every lamebrain.

Afterlife

They confiscate snowglobes. You know those are very dangerous too, right? Who knows what kind of liquid there is within them? You might not look like a terrorist but who knows what sinister thoughts are in your possession locked up out of sight in your mind. *Reminds me of the saying whatever you think, you are that person. They are the ones with the sinister thoughts.*

Haah, there are even funnier things. Like confiscating pies. Yeah yeah, apple pies, pumpkin pies, cranberry pies, the pies you know. Why, you ask? Because the pies committed the crime of having almost the same consistency of a certain type of explosive! Blows your mind, no?! How exactly is all this making flights safer and the world a better place?: I have no idea.

Once, they confiscated my tiny-miny-mo Swiss knife. It was so small, much smaller than the knives they give on the airplane. I tried to argue some sense into these people but we know they're not exactly the types for sense or logic. Twice, they confiscated my things saying they'd be trusting it to the pilot and I could get it back when getting off. My ass, of course. But hey, why don't they come up with such an arrangement? They certainly can set it up. If they want. That is the essential point. Why should they want to think of your benefit? This stuff is sold at government stores. It's not enough that they tax you, that they make you pay for "security" at airports to hassle you, on top of that, they confiscate your belongings for a thrift reason to sell and make more money for themselves to squander. *A superb business model!*

Well, at least your stuff has an afterlife.: you should be glad. Don't you always say that things should be of use? Aren't you a utilitarian?

Yes, I am, but I also believe myself to be a logical person who does not want to be dictated or dominated over

by stupid people.

Da rules are da rules, don't you know?

Yes, they are madam. Even though they may not be based on any logic or real purpose.

You can go and look for your knife to buy it back. These things go pretty cheap.

Of course, they're stolen contraband after all. They didn't sweat to earn them. It's like the thieves markets in several countries. When your camera gets stolen travelling in Bangkok, just ask where the thieves market is and buy it back from your thief. That's how the smart world works.

Not all items sold in those shops are confiscated material, there is also the lost and found.

Yeah, I give you that one. Sometimes you make a donation to them. It happens of course. Life...

12.11.2014

The following week... More Stories

“It's fine if they strip you down naked and view you through a machine, it's not fine and you get to be fined if you strip down yourself and everyone sees the natural way you were born!”

That's how Ayşe woke up one morning. She was now spending her days reading about security. She had read this news a couple of days ago. She was furious then too but it took some more time to really hit her. Apparently, two English women took out all their clothes when the security officer told them to take off their belts and jackets. The incident took place at Manchester Airport in 2013. They were taken to court and made to pay a fine for exhibitionism, indecent exposure.

No, she was charged for public nuisance, causing a disturbance. A Public order offence.

Whatever... They were given the choice to pay a

penalty to be let go, but they wanted a trial, preferred to go to court instead. *I don't know if it was a wise decision.* So they ended up paying for the court expenses too. One was ordered to pay a £55 fine, a £20 victim surcharge and £850 costs. The other one pleaded guilty and got away with £500 costs and a £15 victim surcharge.

They didn't even strip down completely. Just took off their tops. *And that is such an unacceptable, unseen thing in Europe, right? It hurts one's morals.*

Actually only one took off her top completely, the other took off the shirt only, kept the bra. The women claimed it was the security officer telling them to “Take it all off” and they were just obeying orders. The prosecutor said “I don't know what possessed you to take off your clothes but it wasn't the security officer.” The news report emphasized their being moms and their having drunk a bottle of wine. And going a little bit too far. *But there naturally is no mention of these airport security controls going too far.*

Best rated comment on one site giving this news said: “Well done girls, about time someone highlighted these jumped up doormen for what they really are.” It got 3400 ups, 370 downs.

An 80 year-old World War II veteran had passed through security and when they were digging into his bag he said “What do you expect to find in there, a rifle?” He was arrested and fined 78 dollars for “causing public disturbance.”

A former world boomerang record holder had three boomerangs in her carry-on as they were fragile and would be crushed if sent in the check-in luggage. They weighed less than 3 oz each. When the “security” confiscated the boomerangs and the woman swore, she was handcuffed for breach of peace and had to pay 500 dollars for bail.

Yes, there might be the other side of the story in these cases but I'm afraid I cannot approve them even with

excuses. The security chief defended the arrest of the 80 year-old uncle by saying other passengers heard the word "rifle." *So what? They were scared the hell out of it? They've never heard that word before? If they haven't, they wouldn't know what it is anyway :)*

Of course boomerangs are not among the prohibited items list. TSA spokeswoman said "The screeners have the discretion to decide whether or not that item could be used as a weapon." Thing is, these people almost never use their discretion to realize that some things are just ordinary items, to let a peanut butter go, their discretion is only to take away your things out of whim.

A 17 year-old girl was detained. Why? She had a gun decoration in her wallet!

Ah, but you're skipping a most important detail. It was stitched and even embossed a bit. Of course, come on, that implies she's a direct threat! Why should a young girl get such a wallet in the first place?

Well, to me, they should go directly to the source and put a fine on the person who produced that wallet! Don't let them get away with it. Ah, the government gets away with producing and using real guns, but that's a separate subject, don't mix the two up.

These incidents are all taken the "tsablognews" website. They have all sorts of news. Even though I'm on the same side with them and agree with most of their assertions, I have to admit some remarks are a bit way off the mark. They've posted videos of children, handicapped children being molested, hassled... 3 year-olds crying saying they don't want to go to Disneyland. I'm sorry but I don't see any hassling or molesting in any of those videos. And again sorry but apparently they're unaware what 3 year-olds generally do? They cry, they cry for so many trivial, arbitrary reasons you cannot imagine. So to say that the

“security guards caused them to cry like that” is going a bit too far I'd say. Still... This security theater people have gone way way too far, that's a different story.

The oil of the peanut butter in a man's luggage separated to the top. When the security questioned him of this “liquid” that could not be carried on to the flight, the man turned to his wife and 6 year-old twin daughters saying “They're confiscating my bombs.” Upon which he was put in handcuffs and jailed for 25 hours. He was suing for 5 million dollars, I couldn't find out what happened. If it was refused or if he got anything. Most people blamed him and said he got what he deserved, just because you don't joke about such things at an airport in front of security guards. What were they supposed to do? Ignore him?

Well, you look at the people, a family with children, you look at the jar which says peanut butter and come on... Or you can simply make the man eat the peanut butter and let him go. You may even force him to finish all of it. Or you confiscate it anyway. Yeah yeah, I know, one of these days someone will invent an edible bomb and we will never be able to feel safe. Not even when we're buying food from the supermarket. Everything will need to be specially tested for whatever it may be...

At one airport, they were now actually making an announcement like “Passengers are reminded that any inappropriate joke or remark concerning security may result in your being arrested.”

Good for them! You are reminded! My ass... They should say it out openly, 'You are warned! To know your place. This is a threat. Don't even attempt. And you cannot say you didn't know.'

Grateful for the order you issue us

Orders, orders, that must be obeyed at all times. As if these regulations and laws have been passed by God!

Who writes these regulations? Who writes these announcements? Someone in an office feeling powerful because he has some authority and is trying to make a living for himself while coming up with some new fancy measure to justify his existence. *Well, I'm not sure if they feel they need to justify their existence. It might only be that they enjoy coming up with something new every time, they're so much caught into the game they play.*

In America you could ask for a patdown but of course then came the question of the limit of patdowns. What if they overdid it? Who decided the point in which it became government-prescribed/approved/administered sexual harassment?

There are levels of security, levels of aggression, and every person has one's own comfort and belief zone. Should the security at airports be able to do whatever they want for the sake of security? What about strip searches or body cavity searches? Should they have limits? If yes, what should those limits be? Who decides what is invasive of one's personal right and property and what is not?

There comes in the question of the quality of the security officers, police, or any other authority with power. Okay, there are nice ones among them. By chance. *Like Thoreau advising his tax-collector neighbor who came to fine him, to quit his job for the government, these people should quit their jobs. I understand, they're trying to make a living but please, there are, should be, better ways to make a living than harassing people. But then again, the good ones shouldn't be quitting. At least they make the way things go at this moment a bit more pleasant. But collectively, they've developed a mob mentality. Unfortunately, the bad is rather the rule instead of the exception in those positions. Most are power happy. That's*

why they take such a job. People who love ruling other people provide jobs for those who are not capable of doing other things than guarding people. Someone was saying for the security officers “These people seem to be picked up from prisons.” There are horror stories of the way the sick and the elderly and children have been treated... There has been many reports of abuse and thefts by authorities. I once had my luggage-lock broken in America. It was a special lock that the TSA could open with a special key. I had paid extra money for it. When I asked, the responsible said “That's for internal flights, not international.” So someone, looking at an x-ray of my luggage, decided there might be something that might be dangerous and went and damaged my private property (the lock) to go into my private luggage. This was done “legally.” And nobody compensated for my loss when they didn't find anything. *They could have at least given me a new lock. I would appreciate if they apologized too of course. Okay, it's a tiny thing, a very tiny thing but what right do they have? What right do they have at all?* But as I said, people have had their things stolen, I must be thankful my stuff was complete.

But I am not. What's more, I demand... If they're going to go through my stuff, sorry but I want to be present there too. Don't I have that right? Call me and tell me to open my luggage. Why are you breaking my lock?

But I shouldn't be ungrateful for what they're doing *for me*. Security is working, right? There hasn't been terrorist attacks “in a long time.” Yeah, you know I'm protecting you from flooding by a special, magical charm I constructed. I'm not even charging you for it. My mother is protecting me from harm by her prayers. My things go smooth. Why? All because of her prayers. Don't you know the prayer of mothers are holy and accepted? *But don't ask me how come some mothers suffer bad things happening to their children. I don't have an answer to that. Mothers pray and pray for the well-being of their children, still, some lose*

them.

There is a risk all the time, everywhere, anywhere. The governments cannot admit it's impossible to eliminate every single terrorist act. Of course not. How can they? That would mean accepting incompetence.

Actually it happened in January 2011 in Russia. After an explosion, a bomb attack at Moscow's Domodedovo Airport, Putin's spokesman Dmitri Peskov confessed: "(The) government is taking all (the) necessary measures. But the nature of terror is that none of us, none of the countries in this world, are free from this threat. None of us could ensure 100% security level." *Mind you, he declared this only after it happened to them. As a defense! Otherwise, it's not something he'd normally be doing.*

How else can they govern but by manipulating people, if not by overemphasizing danger, creating fear. Naturally, they have the antidote for your fear. They provide you. But how come people do not see this? If they see it, why don't they do something about it? Albeit, they've started a campaign called "We won't fly" in America but I don't know how effective it is.

One man made a more humorous personal protest... Taped a dildo to a water bottle that he knew was going to be confiscated at the checkpoint.

People have also come up with a National Opt-Out Day. Calling everybody to opt-out to block the system on Thanksgiving, a crowded day at airports. Of course there was the counter-proposal. "Instead of making this Wednesday National Opt-Out Day in which a bunch of self-appointed guardians of liberty slow down the line for everyone by asking for pat-downs," said Baker from the TSA, "maybe what we need is a day when everyone who goes through the line says, 'Thanks for what you do.'"

And what exactly do they do?

Suitcase Surgeons

They do the suitcase surgeon! As they put on surgical gloves to search your bag. It's an accurate definition.

Suitcase Surgeon: Informal term for a TSA employee, derived from the blue gloves they wear. Used ironically, because it's not like what the TSA ever does requires anything remotely approaching the mental capacity of a surgical procedure anyway, even though you may feel as though you've undergone a surgical procedure after they're done with you.

(Definition is from the website "Confessions of a Former TSA Screener" takingsenseaway.wordpress.com)

But of course, they see themselves in a much different light. They've advertised on a pizza box: "See yourself in a vital role for Homeland Security. Be part of a dynamic security team protecting airports and skies as you proudly secure your future."

From the same website we learn that during their training/certification program for full body scanners the instructor says: "It's not like this over in Europe, you know... In Europe, nobody minds giving up their nude images in return for a big heaping pile of safety. It's only in America that people get all up in arms. When you get irate passengers out there, people, just remember: flying is a privilege, not a right."

So maybe that's why we don't have this opt-out thing established in Europe. Maybe people here really do not mind... I wouldn't say "giving their nude images" as there are no full body scanners like that over here or maybe not too much, just mostly metal detectors. And of course the "big heaping pile of safety"... I have no words to say anything against that but just stand in awe at how people believe in their self-value and exaggerate the almost non-existent "safety" to a holy status. And I seriously don't know, cannot understand why people assert flying is a

privilege and you can just skip it if you don't like to go through security. If getting on a bus or train is not a privilege, why should getting on a plane be? What's the difference? Just because it is more expensive???

The instructor finishes the lesson with one last thing: “We’ve been getting a lot of enhanced pat down calls from officers mistaking men’s testicles for bombs. Now, I know there are a lot of different types of genitalia in the world, but please, try to be reasonable, people. Don’t look for threats where there aren’t any. OK?”

Ah, but it's fine to look for threats in every single person that walks into the airport I guess. I'm afraid the instructor isn't even aware that that's *exactly* what the screeners' job is: *To look for threats where there aren't any!*

Then a girl asks, or wants to confirm that “We wouldn't be able to find bombs if people shoved them up their ass, right?” You know what the instructor answers?

“The folks in D.C. know what they’re doing, and of course, they’ve thought of this. Believe me, if there was actionable intelligence on a...cavity threat... they would know about it. And we would get the orders to do whatever was necessary to neutralize that threat, just as soon as it sprang up. D.C. is just on top of it, like that.”

Yeah, security experts say that if the terrorists make it to the airport, it usually is too late. If you want to stop terrorism, you stop them with intelligence, when they're plotting. *So if they come up with that solution, why don't they say it for every other thing as well? They would know people if anybody wanted to put explosives in their ass but not elsewhere... ??? Is that so?*

I guess those people would need the assistance of a doctor and they think any doctor would report it maybe??

The former TSA Screener, Jason Edward Harrington ends it with “A kind of deferential silence falls over the class at the mention of “D.C.”— always an unquestioning

reverence for headquarters.”

He has come up with several options for what the acronym TSA could stand for: Taking Sense Away or Thousands Standing Around or Toilet Safety Administration... Take your pick!

Pilots are understandably even more angrier... I mean, they're not trusted to take the smallest and dullest of knives either. Heey, you know what?! They may have bad motives too and use it against a passenger, or against the other pilot to hijack the plane! Ha ha ha. Again this former TSA employer was saying... “Usually, I was stopping them from doing important things for very stupid, federally mandated reasons. For instance, over the course of my duty I sometimes had to look airline pilots in the eye and tell them, with a straight face, that it was necessary to confiscate items from their carry-ons due to the possibility that the items could potentially be used to hijack their own planes. I did this supposedly in the interest of the safety of the American public. After such confiscations, I used to turn to my fellow T.S.A. agents and speculate about the chances the pilot would swing the plane around and crash it into the airport for revenge.”

Another pilot was told he had a fork in his bag, “I have to take that away sir.” The pilot responded sarcastically, asking the security guard “Would you come up to the flight deck and stop me pointing the aircraft at terra firma? Also would you help me to decide if I should use the fork as a weapon against myself or the axe that sits beside me on the flight deck?” He commented “Common sense seems to be a thing of the past.” *It actually is.*

Pointless and inane procedures... You know the worst thing is not your being troubled at the airports and losing time etc. There is a very high consequence other than these... which is, rules making men stupid!

The Grandest Theatre

“For theater on a grand scale, you can't do better than the audience-participation dramas performed at airports, under the direction of the Transportation Security Administration. ... The T.S.A.'s profession of outrage is nothing but 'security theater,’” said the cryptographer, computer security and privacy specialist Mr. Schneier, using the phrase he coined in 2003 to describe some of the agency's procedures.

["Theater of the Absurd at the T.S.A."](#), *The New York Times*; December 17, 2006

What is all this done for?

To have saved the lives of 3-5 people in a *possible* attack? To have saved the lives of 300 people? To have saved the lives of 3,000 people? Did you ever think how many people's lives would be saved in the world with the money spent on this? *Are we so selfish? We have the money and the property, and are ready to spend money that not the least harm may come to our comfort? Are we so selfish?*

Ah yes, if you say some people's lives are saved, that job opportunities are created for the security people, seriously, what about creating a different work field and making those people work in social aid for example?

“We are the rich, we have the money and we want to spend it on the *possibility* of something happening to us while there is something *actually* happening to so many people out there right now? Are we so selfish?”

“It's not about being rich; nowadays there are so many cheap flights, even people with little money travel. It's the mentality. It's their lives versus someone else's needs. And people value their lives at the maximum, the rest is not important.”

Well... Again Carlo had a point. What else can be more important than one's life when compared to anything in the

world? Maybe the life, the health of your child or your beloveds. The rest?... They're strangers... Ah yes, there are also those people who have ideals, beliefs and are willing and ready to give their lives for others. But their numbers are small. Even though there are people who do not believe in this theater, I don't think there's anybody willing to put his life for it. I am like Galileo too. There's no point in telling these people what you know to be true. The truth doesn't change; the world is turning. What use is it to anybody for you to give your life? Is anything going to change, as if they going to attain the truth? Nopes.

I'm sorry that not everyone realizes the futility of all this theatre. I don't understand how come everybody doesn't realize the futility of this theater? And if they do, how come they do not protest? I guess people have other things to do than protest. Just like people have other things to do than organize terrorist acts. Unfortunately, more people have nothing to do but find ways to baster your balls, in the name of protecting you. These people seem to be suffering from dementia. They seem deranged. Someone was saying that she had not flown for more than ten years and was not planning to unless there was an emergency for fear that these people's mental disease would rub off on her.

Consequences

Theater, mheater, if it makes some people feel better, fine. I mean if they think all the money spent is worth that feeling. But to me, seems it's more like they're not thinking. It's easier not to think and get along with dictations. At least for most people.

Yeah but the fact that it's a theater doesn't make it automatically useless. Who knows, even if it being a theater, the theater might be working.

Could be. But there are all the adverse effects. "Senseless attempts to make air travel safer by confiscating

the carry-on items and bottled water only gave people incentive to road-trip to their destinations, greatly increasing their chances of death. Security theater isn't just some harmless bureaucratic placebo and fact of modern-day life: it can discourage activities and behavior in such a way as to have real, pernicious effects upon society." (quote again from the former TSA screener) Apart from the deaths of people (which are 300-400 per year in the US) who decided to drive instead of flying due to these stupid measures, apart from all the trouble caused to ordinary innocent people, confiscations, apparently if you had fertilizer residue in your hands it could be detected as bomb-making residue. Similarly with glycerin from hand lotions... There's also the likes of the 64 year-old German uncle who went into alcohol poisoning after he drained a bottle of vodka when they said "Ditch the booze or pay extra to put it in your check-in luggage." He didn't accept either, "I'll sink the liter of vodka" he decided. Let alone cats and dogs, apparently babies have been placed on x-ray belts! Some people are so clueless, they do not know what to do. That's how stupified we are, what we're turned into. I don't know if it is real but if babies pass they show up as orange blobs on the screen. Even if passing is not true, there definitely has been close calls. (So says the former screener confessor.)

You also wouldn't want to know all the alarm caused by trivial things and stupidities. Terminals have been evacuated because a trace of an explosive was detected by a machine. But the man had already passed the checkpoint. So screeners went looking for the man, couldn't find him, so they circulated his description through the airport. Of course, this was about an hour after he had cleared (!) So next time, don't get it for granted that you're safe and free once you walk away from the checkpoint. People on their planes, waiting to take-off were made to deplane, etc. etc.

Planes making emergency landings when somebody

thinks one passenger lingers too much over an Ipad, stays too long in the bathroom, two Eastern looking men talk secretly, find a threat scribbled in a vomit bag at the back of the seats. All these have taken place... If you browse the Internet for a while, you'll be discovering all types of stories. Of course none of these cases ended up with anything but nothing coming out of it.

Because two men looking like an Easterner, wearing leather jackets (but the weather was hot!), talked in a language that sounded Arabic, looked at their watches often... passengers refused to fly with them, a family deboarded the plane. On their own. Not that they made a fuss. But in the end, they influenced all on board and the passengers mutinied, saying "We won't allow you to fly until you get these two men off this plane." This was the British. Ah the men? They got on the flight the next day.

I've hit so much on the "guards", let me take their side a bit too not to be too unfair. "Our concern is that the public not confuse the people implementing the policies with the people who developed the policies," said Sharon Pinnock, the union's director of membership and organization. Of course "I was just following my superior's orders" is no excuse as in Nuremberg principles. As I said, they can find themselves a different kind of job. Still, they may be right in their own way. Poor them of course. "Molester, pervert, disgusting, an embarrassment, creep. These are all words I have heard today at work describing me. ...These comments are painful and demoralizing," said an unnamed worker. *No, it's not nice at all.*

Opting Out

Ayşe was fixated on this "security" thing at airports. It hurt her human dignity. She at least wanted to be hand-searched.

Why? What's the difference you may ask. At least they are doing something, not just watching me walk through a metal door and let a machine do their job. At least it's a human interaction. It's more decent in my view. Than being ordered around. Or at least they get scared; they wince with the possibility of one more of this donkey flock disobeying them. Submissiveness to authority figures is pretty much inherent in almost all of us. (How can it not be? We're indoctrinated from childhood. Even I still look at people giving out leaflets on the street as someone to avoid. They're troublemakers. You stay away from protests. Being a good citizen, not getting into trouble are ingrained so deep into my being by my parents. They've even prepared cartoons to brainwash children when they're tiny. After all, as the twig is bent, so grows the tree. "Stop, screen, go." That's what they're taught. The parents say "The security officers are protecting us." And then they thank the officers. Even though you have a right to opt-out there, they, of course, do not mention it in the cartoon!)

With the hand-search, you are not permitting, you are not submitting totally to their demented authority. As I have no chance of having these searches completely canceled -as unfortunately most of the "general public" believes in this theatrical show- asking for a hand-search is my only consolation. Asking for a hand-search at least makes them a statement. It's a declaration of your non-compliance with "anything at all." At least, it's a bit obtrusive to them too. It doesn't acquiesce silently, obediently. You're saying you're doing what they say but they do not have your consent. You're not conforming. Even if tiny, it's an act of civil disobedience. The tiniest I am allowed.

She also wanted to do it just for the sake of it. To see how people would react, what they would say, to collect stories, as if making a poll. This way she got insight into human behaviour.

In America, people had the right to refuse to walk through the detector, in Europe she had managed by pushing it a bit, but now she was going to go to Turkey and didn't know what she'd be doing there. She tried to find the regulations if she had such a right in Turkey but couldn't find any information anywhere. *I guess I'm the only one in Turkey wanting to be hand-searched without passing through the detectors!* In the end, a friend mentioned there was a “Private security law.” Ayşe opened up the law and read it:

Article 7 – The private security officers have the authorization to:

a) Pass the people wanting to go in the area they're providing the protection and security for through the sensitive door, to search these people with detectors, pass their belongings through x-ray machines or similar security equipment.

b) During meetings, concerts, sports events, stage performances and similar events and funerals and weddings, they have the right to ask for an ID on top of the previous...

f) In public transport facilities like airports, ports, train stations, bus stations and terminals, to ask for ID, to pass through the sensitive door, to search these people by detectors, to pass their belongings through x-ray machines or similar security equipment.

Under certain conditions, they had the authority to “catch” and “use force.”

Who are these people that are given or take guns into their hands to “protect” us? Who are these people?

The law only talked about the authority of the security officers. Ayşe wanted to know her rights. The rights which apparently she didn't have. *Do I have the right to refuse to go through that detector? No, I'm not refusing to be searched; I mean I would have liked to be able to refuse it but I know they're not going to let me on the plane if I did*

so. Unfortunately, we don't share the same views with neither the government nor most people. Do I have a right to ask for a hand-search?

Apparently no, I don't have any rights. My only right is to refuse to pass through the place there is "security." And that right is only valid for now. I don't know how much time we have until we come to the world that any smallest movement on my part without having to deal with them is inhibited.

Doing Something

"You have to act," said Carlo. Ayşe was going at this every day.

"I will be acting on it. I offered you so many ideas and you trampled on them all."

"Like what?"

"Like going to the airport in a t-shirt with a slogan. Handing out leaflets. Then they'll be binding my hands and stuffing me into some room."

"You cannot do that right at the check-in area in front of the guards. You'd be disrupting their work."

"I'm not going to do that there. I'll be doing it at the entrance of the airport. But they'll be stopping me anyway."

"First you have to check the rules and regulations; you cannot go around without knowing."

Ayşe was in amazement once again. "You realize what you are saying?!!! I have to read rules and regulations..."

Carlo stopped her sentence and said "Just read a bit of Sun Tzu. He says 'So it is said that if you know your enemies and know yourself, you can win a hundred battles without a single loss. If you only know yourself, but not your opponent, you may win or may lose. If you know neither yourself nor your enemy, you will always endanger yourself.' You have to know the enemy in order to beat it,

how it functions. I'm trying to help you. Otherwise you'll be just hitting your head to the wall. Is that what you want to do?"

Ayşe grew upset at her husband. She was annoyed. "I didn't say I'd be just going and doing it! But you do realize what you are saying, right?? I have to check *their* rules just to make sure I can just say something, distribute a piece of paper with my thoughts on it! It's free speech. I am supposed to be afraid of them in the first place, as they have the guns and prisons. I'd better, right? If I don't want to rot in a prison. This is losing from the beginning. They have the upper hand, they've written the rules, they can change them anytime at their own discretion too."

Carlo was annoyed too and he insisted, repeating once more. "If you do anything against their laws, they'll just put you away, and that's it. Case closed. I'm trying to make your efforts not go to waste. You have to explain your view. You have to give a speech."

"That's why I need to write the book first."

"You don't need the book."

"Yeah, so people can read my ideas. I need to write. Be known a bit. Publish everything online or somewhere, then inform the media and tell them you're going to be doing this thing at this place at this time. I'll burn up all my papers. When the government puts me behind bars, the media will be there. That's the only way you may be talked about. For a while at least. Then something 'big' or important comes up, people start talking about that and forget about you. But then, maybe a century later somebody picks up your story and says 'See, she was right, she saw this all that way back.'"

"You cannot beat them like that."

"You have to get one thing amore. I'm not trying to beat the government. I just cannot take it anymore. It's like Rosa Parks rejecting to give her place to a white. Somebody needs to do it. Somebody needs to speak up. I guess she was fed up with the discrimination. Now, okay, maybe not

everybody, but people know her name. They might be saying the same thing about me. 'Look, this was so obvious, and only she spoke up.'

As her name had come up, Ayşe looked up Rosa Parks. So Rosa had not sat in place of the whites. She had just declined to give her seat to a white when the white section was full. It wasn't even an outright defiance. The bus driver ordered her to and she didn't. Ayşe also found out Rosa was not the first to protest, not the only one. But why was she the only one that was known? Perhaps because she was the right person and the right time had come and it had grown into a movement afterwards where the blacks went on to boycott the buses. Because it turned into a significant protest in the end. Ayşe also read a funny story. It was during the Montgomery bus boycott in 1955-56. A black man was getting off a bus. The driver saw in his rear view mirror a black woman running, waving the cane in her hand. When the woman made it to the bus, the driver said "There was no need to rush, auntie. I would have waited for you anyway." The woman was furious, "First of all, I ain't your auntie," she retorted. "Second, I wasn't running to get the bus, I'm running after that guy to beat him up!"

Rosa Parks was "tired of giving in." She paid for it, was fired from her job, got death threats. Okay, she didn't get killed but there were bombings even after they won their cause and returned to the buses after a bit more than a year. Bus operations had to be suspended after dark because snipers of white groups shot at buses.

These are not things to do of course. What you may do, is start a private bus company yourself, operating it only for whites.

A group tried to do that. A whites-only bus service.

And what happened?

I don't know. Probably it didn't work.

"A round sticker," Carlo started.

“Let it be square at least,” Ayşe commented. Thinking there would be more room to fit more words, to optimize word space.

“Count on some experience to get the attention of the public. I have some knowledge in this area.” After all, he was the public relations man.

“Okay.” Not that Ayşe liked the square either; even if the circle was not more honest than the square, it was more flexible, more inclusive.

They discussed what slogans they could write in t-shirts. Carlo took a notebook and wrote, “STOP Being sheep. Use your right to be hand-searched.”

“That's an insult; I wouldn't use it,” Ayşe said.

Later on, *as he likes converting my sentences into his*, he wrote her sentence “I'm no more of a threat than you are,” putting it as “I'm less of a threat than you are...” He then looked at the sentence and commented: “This is the real insult.”

“Why?”

“They'll be saying 'We are defending you, we are putting our lives to protect you, and you dare say this to us! That we are the threat!' What would you answer to them?”

Ayşe had to think only for a second to answer. “Thiefs got into my house twice -once in Turkey, once in Italy-when I was sleeping. Nobody would have stopped them from killing me had they wished to do so. How are you the ones to be defending me?”

Carlo didn't say anything. Ayşe was disheartened once more. Anything she suggested, he would be coming up with a counter-reaction. It was hard to make people see something in a different way than they already saw it. If she couldn't convince even her husband, someone who was so dear and so near, what chance did she have of making anybody else understand?

She went in and thought a bit more. “Security theater.” “Opt out.” That would work in America, here you needed to

add “If you can.” Or “If they let you.”

Carlo came up to her after a while. He had written down some suggestions. Among them were two good ones Ayşe approved of:

“What makes you think I only want to be secure after THAT point? I am more worried where I am standing NOW.”

“Real security starts in society. Make the world a better place to live in. Stop wasting money on public security.”

What did Proudhon say? He said "Liberty is the mother, not the daughter of Order." *I similarly declare "Security is the daughter of Liberty too, not its mother." I know, I put it in a complicated way. But stop and think for a bit. In short, first comes Liberty, who is the mother of Security and Order. You cannot put Security as a mother, you cannot put guards everywhere. If you do, Liberty, Security's mother dies. If, on the other hand, you let Liberty live, Security will thrive. The healthier the mother is, the healthier the baby.*

“Above all, you cannot assume that I might be posing a risk, ask me to prove my innocence before I proceed. Everybody is innocent until proven guilty. That's the universally accepted justice code,” she repeated to her husband. “Besides, to me, you are legitimizing a terrorist to carry a gun too once you carry the gun yourself.”

“Yeah, that's what they do in America. They go around with guns, saying 'I'll protect myself if anyone tries to trespass my limits.'”

“I'm not talking about that. I'm just talking about the implications. When you shout at a child, you are legitimizing shouting when you are upset. To me, a terrorist has an equal amount of right to a gun if the government carries it. NOBODY should be allowed to carry a gun. Gun factories should be abolished.”

“People do it anyway...”

“Of course, they're making a lot of money.”

“People build their own guns when they want to fight. You cannot avoid it.”

“Okay but at least they won't be mass produced and be used freely to threaten under the guise of 'legal.'”

“You got it all the other way around. The government didn't get the gun to threaten you, they got it because first somebody got a gun to use against you. Then, the police got the gun to protect you.”

“Okay,” said Ayşe once again. “And then they thought to themselves, 'Hey, I've got a gun. And I have the authority to use it. Why don't I use it for myself against these people? What a smart idea!' So they were just proud of themselves and started going around with a smile on their face as a mask and doing whatever vicious desires that was breeding in them.”

Upon which Carlo came up with another assertion. “For your wish of not being searched yourself, other people will be risking their lives.”

“So?”

“So you are fine with an innocent person being killed because you do not want to be searched?”

“Including myself... Yes.”

Actually Carlo had expressed it badly and wrongly. Ayşe would always object to an innocent person being killed; what she said did not automatically bring the result of an innocent person to be killed, there was only a *risk* of being killed.

“They may not wish to do it. They'd rather be searched and be safe.”

“You know that's an illusion. An illusion of safety. But okay. If they want to, they themselves may lead that life. Their life full of fear and security. Then at least they grant me an option. To be able to get on an airplane without being searched. They build two airports. One that searches everyone, another that doesn't.”

“Interesting idea,” replied Carlo. “But there's one

problem with that. Money. Economics.”

“Don't come up with that to me! As if all these security measures are not costing a fortune!”

“There are the costs of running a plane. Planes are expensive. Nobody would want to risk losing a plane.”

“There has to be someone rich enough who feels and thinks like me to put in the money for it. It's just a matter of finding the right person.” She also added, “There is something called insurance for the risk of losing a plane.”

Where does the budget of all this airport security come from? Of course from us. From people who fly. It is hidden in the price of the plane ticket. So we just do not notice how much we're actually paying for it. What if people had to pay, I'm making it up, 20 Dollars *extra* to have a security check *right before* flying?... Would they still be willing to go for security? Or would they prefer to go for the cheaper flight? Of course the cost of “security” is not only monetary. There is your privacy being invaded, freedom limited too. I get both to pay for this security thing and am the one who is inconvenienced. If people are made to become aware of these things they do not generally bother to think about.

If governments want to spend money on this security, they use their own money that they earn elsewhere. Not *my* money!

All this pushed Ayşe to anarchism. As far as she understood, these searches were government imposed, not airline imposed. *I don't know if the airlines want the security. Even if they do, it should be themselves providing the security. Thus, we could get different services if we wished.* There could be airlines who wanted to serve customers not worried about the possibility of being blown up in air, there could be those who served the customers wanting a full cavity search of every single person they would be flying with. *Even though the latter seems a bit surreal to me, I'm almost sure the number of those would be greater than the former.* Sedating people for the

duration of the flight, or chaining them to their seats could be other solution alternatives. (Don't worry, you'd be accompanied by armed guards when you want to go to the toilet.) *So nobody wants to fly without being searched or no airline wants to carry passengers that have not been searched? Okay then, agreed, accepted. But whenever someone, that someone again being the government, interferes with my life with an order from above, I cannot accept that.*

After thinking for a while, she realized the crookedness of Carlo's assertion. "Besides, governments have put jails, tortured, killed innocent people. So you are saying the same thing as I am 'So what?' to innocent people being killed by being for the government."

"You think you can fight or beat government."

"No, I don't. Government is an illusion, albeit a very persistent one. And almost everyone believes in it. It will disappear by itself when people stop believing."

Let's Have a bit of Divergence for Fresh Air

Apparently the CEO of Ryanair, Michael O'Leary said "We are not in danger of dying at the hands of toiletries." He added that Osama bin Laden must be rolling around the caves of Pakistan laughing. "The people being subjected to intense security are not terrorists and not fanatics. They are actually called holiday-makers." O'Leary went on: "The best way to defeat terrorists and extremists is for ordinary people to continue to live their lives as normal. Because of additional security restrictions imposed by the government the shambles at airports has been anything but normal."

Yeah but you know what kind of a person O'Leary is? He is foul-mouthed man and has a reputation.

What kind of reputation?

Not a good one. One of his nicknames is "Mad Mike."

He seems to be calling everybody names all the time. They say he probably thinks there is no such thing as bad publicity and does this in order to get in the news. His other nickname is Michael O'Really! He has claims that are deemed a bit "outlandish." For example, he proposed to charge a fee per pee.

Ah, I had heard about that. So that was it.

Yeah. I mean it's reasonable. As he said, they fly an hour on average around Europe. "What the hell do we need three toilets for?" Get rid of two of them and gain six seats in their stead. Someone asked if he considered charging £5 so that nobody would use the loo at all and he answered: "If someone wanted to pay £5 to go to the toilet I would carry them myself. I would wipe their bums for a fiver."

Nice answer!

He also said "All this pious stuff about... you can't charge for entering the toilet. All right then, we'll charge you to exit the toilets."

That's nice too. I think I like the guy.

He also said "I don't give a toss where people want to go. I'm in the business of creating a market for people to go where they have never heard of."

That's nice too. I agree with him. You don't open new routes because people want to go there but take people to places you think they should go and see.

Come on... You know what he said for environmentalists? "We want to annoy the fuckers ... The best thing we can do with environmentalists is shoot them ... They are luddites marching us back to the 18th century."

Okay, that's a bit too far off. I agree.

He also got a taxi licence for his Mercedes to avoid traffic being able to use bus lanes. He had a meter too but when he got caught using his own taxi, he hired a chauffeur as well.

Smart! As long as he pays his taxes and all is legal, why

shouldn't he do it? He has the money...

That's what he answered. "Last time I checked this was a democratic republic." But it is abuse of course. And Ryanair staff cannot even charge their mobiles using the company's electricity. It is harsh. Apparently it is the least liked airline, The customers do not like it either.

Ah but they keep flying. The cost is more important than anything to most people. As long as it gets to the destination.

It seems so.

Anyway... What's your point? None of these render O'Leary's comments on the security issue meaningless or wrong.

No, it doesn't. He may even support the idea of a "security searchless" airport. As long as it suits his pocket.

Rational versus Irrational- Who wins?

I'm tired of complying... Complying with this security lunacy.

After all, planes are a means of public transportation. Seriously, why aren't we searched getting on buses too? Let's search every passenger getting on at every stop too please! I don't know about trains, having not been in a station for a long while in Turkey, are there searches going into the station? (They don't in Italy.) There are no searches getting on the metro. There's a security man there but as a decoration. Why is everybody searched when getting on a plane? What's the sin of the poor plane for being punished? Because it gets all passengers at one go and can be mass-controlled rather easily?

Facts schmacts... There were train bombings in 2004 in Madrid. Killed 191, wounded about 2,000. There were underground bombings in London in 2005. 52 killed, more than 700 injured. Sooo? Why isn't anything done about

this? Why don't we take off our shoes, our belts at every station? Why don't we toss our water bottles into the trash? I'm asking *sul serio*, I want an answer. If anybody can give me one! If any government official can give one.

Shall I try to answer my own question? This is how the mechanism works: After an incident, the public asks "Is the government sleeping?" and demands "You must do something." The politicians of course are concerned about their asses, afraid of being taken down or not being elected; so they set up theaters. The public did not demand a theater for these modes of transportation. Just not yet... *Has to happen more often for them to cry out.*

I understand, one time big numbers have a much bigger impact than the real high numbers which accumulate over time. An event like September 11, alarms people. The lives car accidents claim in a year, are seen as ordinary incidences. On one side, there is hysteria, on the other fearmongering. The fearmongering fuels more hysteria. The more hysteria among the public the more governments fearmonger. It's an endless vicious cycle. Politicians use events to their advantage, the press likes fearmongering as well as it sells. Pumping it up all the time.

The media promotes terrorism. Otherwise how could it survive and make the necessary propaganda to instill that fear? You may just go over the last decade's newspapers to read all the doomsday scenarios people have come up with. None of which has happened. Yet, those words have been uttered, and people have been made to fear. Who cares how people are affected by all this propaganda? All these have adverse effects in the human psyche. You had said "We didn't have these twenty years ago." There, you have the answer. Our fearmongering dosage was not so high twenty years ago. Plus of course there's the technology developing.

People, scholars that is, have analysed and written about the superfluous money spent on this stuff.

Terror, Security, and Money: Balancing the Risks, Benefits, and Costs of Homeland Security was printed at Oxford University Press in 2011. I quote from them: “to be considered cost-effective, American homeland security expenditures would have had each year to have saved nearly 11,500 lives or to have foiled, prevented, or protected against up to 1,667 attacks something like the one apparently intended on Times Square in 2010—or more than four per day. More specifically, analyses applying assumptions substantially biased toward the opposite conclusion suggest that the likelihood of a successful terrorist attack on a typical office-type building would have to be a thousand times higher than it is at present for protective security measures to be cost-effective.” They acknowledge that there are public and political pressures but say this doesn't grant the government the right to spend public money in an irresponsible and useless way.

You have to understand risk assessment but you also have to understand politics a bit. That's what lies behind all this. If the government does not take action... Let's say we give up any security, all checks. Imagine what would happen if there was a similar thing to 9/11... What then?... People would make such a big uproar, no government can stay alive. They cannot run the risk. They cannot take a chance on it.

Yes, but that's what I'm telling you. There is nothing stopping the so-called “terrorists” from blowing up any of the other soft places. It's just the same thing. It's like trying to protect people from life. **You accept some risk with every breath you take.** Besides, Police needs a search warrant to come and search your house. But when you go out yourself wishing to get on a plane, the government gave this warrant wholesale/en masse/lump sum. What kind of a thing is this? Apparently there is a poster: “Take my civil liberties; I wasn't using them anyway.”

The horrifying side of these searches is: People are

obedience trained with this theater. The notion is reinforced. Be well-behaved citizens. Again as someone said “We are not citizens with leaders, we are subjects with rulers.” I keep saying the same thing. Some people are just ready to give up anything, do the monkey because they are so terrified of this boogeyman that governments have created. *If you do not think the threat is imaginary, it's still these governments that have created them.*

What people need to get deeply incised in their minds is that nobody, understand, NOBODY blows himself up for pleasure. *Apart from psycopaths and masochists of course. But then again, think how many people are born that way, how many are made to be so? The society, the way we live turns babies into such grown-ups.* Why don't I feel like blowing up an airplane? But even I do feel like blowing up a government building. I definitely would do it if I had the capacity to do so. Preferably at night, without hurting anybody. But I would do it. Like in V for Vendetta. Blowing one's self up is the last resort, the highest point of desperation and destruction, i.e. self-destruction. It's either out of a real or perceived grievance that a person engages in such an act. And it is usually the former. When you run out of options, when nobody is listening to you, when nobody seems to hear you, when nobody seems to care about you... what do you do? It's the same for people who commit suicide. You feel stuck. You feel there's no way out of the hell you're in. *No, I haven't committed suicide so I do not know it for sure and cannot speak on behalf of the people who did. But I have thought about suicide at different stages in my life. So I have at least an idea.* It's not that you want to hurt other people, you want to take away the hurt you feel. I mean, they probably do want to hurt other people but only because they have been hurt themselves. It's nothing personal, it's something natural. That's how basic human nature works.

The world should have been in mayhem long ago had

there been so many “terrorists” as they try to make people believe. Actually, the world is in mayhem, but not because of terrorists but because of governments. Yes, I'm an anarchist. I don't believe in governments. I don't believe in money either. As you must have understood, I don't believe in security either. I don't believe in many other things either. *I guess I'm not much of a believer in this world.*

Well, you have to accept it's a little bit difficult to believe in with the way things run. But as long as so many people believe in these things, it's almost impossible to give up on them. It would be like driving on the right-side of the road when everybody is driving on the left.

It seems that *not many people get it that these searches mean accepting defeat against terrorism. The purpose of terrorism is to terrorise. If we do this, they have won. And apparently they have. Not by killing people but by turning people into robots and robot obeyers. By creating a group of robots and the rest being obeyers of robots.*

People who see the searches as a necessary measure and those doing the searches as their protectors could be suffering from the Stockholm Syndrome. You haven't heard of such a syndrome? I save you the trouble of looking up for yourself and quote from Wikipedia: Stockholm Syndrome “is a psychological phenomenon in which hostages express empathy and sympathy and have positive feelings toward their captors, sometimes to the point of defending and identifying with them.” Bonding to the aggressor is the individual's response to trauma in becoming a victim. Identifying with the aggressor is one way that the ego defends itself. When a victim believes the same values as the aggressor, they cease to be perceived as a threat.

I understand, beliefs are not supposed to be rational. But because irrational beliefs are as low-cost as it can get, people buy into them. Yes, some people are so fearful that they believe the Evil Monster in the body of a human is

lurking around airports to sneak in at the slightest slack of security so that he can kill hundreds or thousands. There are so many places to do that if one wished to do so. Okay, in Turkey there are searches in almost every building you walk into and they search you at the entrance of the airport, not just before the free-shop area. But what about all the other airports in the world where there are so many people at check-ins? Someone on a forum wrote if he were a terrorist, he'd pick a day with heavy traffic airports, coordinate with others at major airports, and bomb the security line. And vola! There's no security anywhere anymore.

That's what Ayşe had been saying all along.: To her husband. "People in the waiting line or at check-ins can be blown up so easily." *Let me say this out loud in Turkey and see if I'll be put in trial if not in jail for promoting terrorism!*

"The trouble is, if anything like that happened, the lesson they'd be getting won't be 'All this was so unnecessary, all the trouble we have been causing.' No, their lesson would be 'So all this was not enough, see, we need to employ even stricter rules,'" she said.

"Of course. They're soldiers. That's how they see the world. In terms of security and protection," replied Carlo.

"Yes. Those people need to find a reason for their existence. Otherwise, what good are they for?"

Carlo believed in government, the inevitability of it. "Read politics a bit, read philosophy, read history. Politics comes from the Greek word *polis*, meaning city. People living in communities, as small as they could be, soon found out that there was a need to take decision regarding the community and they tried to find a way to come to these decisions: either delegating the responsibility to the wisest or stronger amongst them, or sharing them among the whole community - when these were small... You live in a city, in a community, things need to run, you have to take

decisions, some sort of governance is necessary. You cannot avoid it," he would say every time Ayşe came up with her anarchist ideas. "You're thinking of yourself," he'd go on. "You would act properly, comport well without an authority, but what about the less behaved majority?"

Ayşe didn't have much to say against that. Carlo could be right. Still, Ayşe preferred to believe in the good of people. She actually didn't believe in that either. She didn't like people. It was only that the government was composed of people and when they had power they became worse. Petty, logic-impaired people in some position of power were really dangerous. More dangerous than any other... They got drunk with power, thought they were the law themselves and looked for preys to go after. Then there was all the unnecessary idiotic bureaucracy that the wheels of this machine produced. She found it unbearable to put up with it. Let alone being annoying and soul consuming, it stole time, the very essence of life. Plus, what's illegal had no meaning for Ayşe, she just cared about what she considered was right and should be. Morals was not defined by legality. Laws had run rampant long time ago. They needed to be simplified and reduced at least a thousandfold.

But they didn't go into any of that this time. Carlo just said that crime would make them reinforce the security measures.

"Yes, crime gives governments a reason to exist. So they can easily say they are going to be protecting you. They attack civil liberties. They think they have a right to exercise control over us. An explosion would give them the excuse."

Ayşe actually felt a very strong desire to punch the governments in the face. But as fate would have it, government was not a physical entity. It had infiltrated into people's brains, everywhere, everywhere. Which of its arms would you be cutting, which of its hands, which of its fingers? Ayşe would not have the strength to even harm one of its nail. Let alone, she couldn't do it. She wasn't much

inclined to violence apart from breaking a glass or a bottle when she was very angry. Let alone, even so, she'd afterwards apologize from the thing she broke. Ah, she also sometimes made her hand into a fist to hit the wall. But then, she didn't think of apologizing from her hand.

On the other hand, even if she couldn't do it herself, she might have liked someone else to apply violence on the government. But there was no end to this. Violence would not serve anything.: except strengthening the monster. If they were to be destroyed one day, governments had to be destroyed first in the minds of people, by dismantling their belief. That was the only way.

As good-willing as you may be, any idea that is outside the classic parlance generates a strong reaction in people. Ayşe knew this quite well. “I confess...” she said. “It's one thing shooting all this at you, at the comfort and confidence of my husband, or friends, I have my reservations even for writing and posting this, let alone protesting. I think of what might be happening to me, what they might be doing to me if I openly declared my ideas. I would like to be an important person, someone known, in order to have an influence on as many people as possible. But then again, I'd rather prefer to stay obscure so they don't come and get me. You wouldn't want to be too prominent, otherwise people claim your life. Apart from the government harassing you by trials and jails, you don't know what fanatic is hiding in what corner, what they're b(r)oilng. Hrant Dink got killed on the street in daylight. Orhan Pamuk went with bodyguards for some time, and there are all the others I don't know what happened to. The alternatives seem to be being jailed, being killed, going around with bodyguards. I wouldn't want neither three.”

Anarchy

Anarchy comes from the Greek “arkhos” meaning “ruler”, and the prefix “an” makes it the negative, without ruler. It implies the absence of authority. It is against authority. Even though our Turkish dictionary defines anarchy as chaos, Kropotkin defined it in the Encyclop(a)edia Britannica in 1911 as “Anarchism is the name given to a principle or theory of life and conduct under which society is conceived without government – harmony in such a society being obtained, not by submission to law, or by obedience to any authority, but by free agreements concluded between the various groups, territorial and professional, freely constituted for the sake of production and consumption, as also for the satisfaction of the infinite variety of needs and aspirations of a civilized being.”

See, Kropotkin put it well. People have infinitely different aspirations, needs and values. Why does a government need to dictate and interfere with my views, my aspirations, my everything all the time? I'm not saying nobody should be searched. But nobody should tell me I cannot get on a plane without being searched either. I please want the option to live, and travel the way I want, the way I believe to be right. You need to respect my wishes too. I need air to breath and have a right to it as much as any other person on this planet.

Anarchism is “the theory or doctrine that all forms of government/domination/rulership are unnecessary, oppressive, and undesirable and should be abolished.” In words of Bryan Caplan, a professor of Economics, “Perhaps the state is a necessary evil which we cannot eliminate. But perhaps it is rather an *unnecessary* evil which we accept out of inertia when a totally different sort of society would be a great improvement.”

Anybody should be free to live the way they like. No need to abolish religion or family or society, just don't force them on everyone the way you believe them. Governments

demand blind obedience. And we are brought up to give it to them. I don't want to say this, -it is a very stuck-up assertion, it really is,- but the gene pool of the rational, thinking person is cornered in the shallow end of the pool and rapidly evaporating. People are being turned into robots. On one side are the robots executing “orders”, on the other are us being turned into acting like a robot by the dictum “the law says so.”

Okay, anybody can believe whatever they want. Just don't impose your beliefs or fears on me. Don't oblige me to share your paranoia. I'd rather live my life without all this fearmongering, without the dicta of anybody, especially not *these people!*

Dying: Low or High?

I know I'm making a big deal out of it. The alternative is to laugh at the idiocy of it all. But that is hard, when you know how serious most people, actually almost everybody take these procedures.

I am sure, among the people who read the things I advocate, there will be those who'd say “Oh it served her right, she deserved it” if something happened to me after all these assertions and writings. I think I'd still stand by my beliefs no matter what. I agree with Benjamin Franklin's words of centuries ago: “They who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety.”

It's true... These were easy to say beforehand, when I was single. Now that I have a child, things are different. I am no Gandhi. I'm not fine with them torturing or making my family suffer for my thoughts and actions. Yet, even today, under the same conditions, if I were given the administration of that money they're spending on security, I would give it to the poor in a heartbeat, distribute it among

the needy without blinking an eye and go without any security control myself. *I wouldn't make a politician, right? Nobody would vote for me. Never mind, I have no desire to be a politician anyway. I don't want to rule anybody just as I don't want to be ruled myself.*

I agree. Now that we're so used to this theatre, it would feel strange to walk to the plane just like that, without being searched. One would feel naked. But seriously, we came to this world naked and we're going to go naked.

I heard a story I just loved! Friends were at the Zanzibar Airport. The man said "I'm sorry our x-ray machines broke down." So they needed to open their bags, close them. Okay. Then, just for chatting, someone asked "How long have you been doing this, when did the machines break?"

"Aaah, they've been broken down for five years now." Apparently they did this a bit for the sake of getting a bribe. To get bakshish to save people the trouble of opening and closing their bags. Whatever the case... To someone who was worried, they replied: "Who's going to care about this isolated place?"

I wish people could just relax a bit.

Who believes that life is a game no one is guaranteed to walk out of alive?

That's not a belief, that's a fact.

Sir Ranulph Fiennes, who is said to be 'The World's Greatest Living Explorer', who has climbed Mount Everest in spite of a heart condition, answered in the interview in Times to William Lee Adams's question "Would you have been happy to die on Mount Everest?"

with "I wouldn't be happy to die anywhere in particular."

I'm asking the people who are in favor of these searches... Why would you be fine with dying outside an airport? Or is it the plane you don't want to die in? Then why do you have a fear of dying in the air but not on the ground?

Fiennes went on. "But if there is a subconscious fear of death, then it's best to remove the fear. So you can say things to yourself like, 'If you're going to die anyway, and with other bodies lying around, many of them younger than you, then die high. Don't die low.'"

(This piece was supposed to finish here but couldn't when it got connected with anarchy.)

"Are you going to protest with me at the airport?" asked Ayşe.

"Not while my mother is alive," replied Carlo pursing his lips. "You want to give her a heart attack?"

That was right of course. *On one side there are our mothers, towards whom we feel responsible, on the other are our children, whom we are responsible for. Eh, who is going to change this world how? Do we always have to wait for orphans and bachelors to do things?*

The world which puts the cart before the horse

The things we can do without government surveillance if not interference is diminishing day after day. They keep placing flaming hoops in front of citizens, in front of travelers, in front of people in search of something better in their life. Or people just going about their daily business. I don't know what can be done but I believe it necessary to somehow stop these people. No, I'm sure of the necessity of it. Let's not feed these monsters; they become more depraved every passing day. Certain personalities keen on ruling people. Let us remind these people that they are under our service, that we are not under their dominance. And no, we don't need to play by their rules. I can always sue, the law and courts are there for that? For getting my

rights? No, I don't want it, thank you. Lawsuits are unaffordable not only moneywise but also timewise, they are soul consuming. It drains all the energy out of you. Even if you win, you lose.

I guess what I cannot stand most is the government's hypocrisy. Don't steal from me, don't kill me saying "I'm your protector, I'm serving you." Don't steal from me to build palaces with a thousand rooms for yourself; don't steal from me to go and kill people, don't coerce me to be an accomplice in your murder. When would I be fine with government? When it doesn't attempt to govern me, that's when. But that's its name, government. Feels obliged to govern. Feels it has the right to do so too of course. If you see that right in yourself, say "I'm a thief," say "I'm a murderer," my life is yours. I mean it's of course better if you didn't claim my life... But if my life needs to be claimed anyway, I'd prefer it to be claimed by an "honest" thief, an "outspoken" murderer. *You may say "What's the difference when your life is taken?" That's right too of course...*

"How are things going to work if you do not pay taxes?"

I give money, I give taxes, even as much as they want, but I will dictate where every cent is going to go to. If there is anybody who wants to pay for a palace with a thousand rooms, let them. There are people who would enjoy, feel proud of saying, boasting "What a grand state I have." (I'm not saying this as an attack on Erdoğan, I'm only saying it because it was on the media lately. All governments and 90 percent of what they do is the same for me. One is no better than the other. It's six of one and half a dozen of the other. Tarr'd with the same brush. Anybody who wants to give money to the soldier, let them give it. Anybody who wants to pay for the security equipment at airports, to put security officers here there and everywhere on a salary, help yourself. And yes sir, I will be interfering with everything, I need to have a say in anything done on my behalf. You

might say “If everybody did like you, things would not work.” First of all, everybody will not want to do like me. People prefer not to touch soap and water, to keep their head's down, their nose clean. Second of all, even if they did, if something is meaningful, there will be enough people to support it anyway. He who pays the piper plays the tune. Whereas we pay, I mean they get the money from us by force, *and* they get to play the tune themselves. It's a disgrace. There has to be a limit to insolence.

Richard Buckminster Fuller said “You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.”

Yes, let's start building that new model. Or at least let's start by dismantling our current model. At least the belief in it. Okay, it doesn't have to be anarchy. I actually do not like the word myself much, as, even though not correct, it has so many bad connotations coming with it. It's associated with lawlessness, vandalism, immorality, violence. People equate anarchy with terror. Even though they are two separate concepts, because public has been using it that way, it has been inscribed in brains as such. Anarchists and terrorists are madmen throwing bombs. Okay, let it not be anarchy but as homelandstupidity.us website suggests, “Government is stupid. Discover a better way to organize society.” Seriously, just do it! It's not a big deal with all this advance in technology. The only thing that is lacking is some smart person at the top of it all.

“You cannot say that. It's not that simple.”

“Why not?”

“Because it's not.”

“But it is. I'm talking about running a country, the financial part. My proposal is partially put into action in Italy. You may give 5 per thousand of your due tax to any NGO of your wish. I don't see any reason for it not to be a 1000 per thousand. They make a list of expenditures and how much is needed for what. Then, people may go online

and pay their taxes distributing it to causes they see worth.”

“There will be things nobody will pay for.”

“Like what?... If it is something that needs to be done, believe me, there will be people willing to put their money on it. And if they do not, that means it's not really worth it. I may not give a cent for the military but there are loads of people out there who will be putting all their tax money on soldiers. Sorry... Plus, not everybody is like me. People do not mind, do not want to be involved with such banalistic matters. They prefer to just give the money and let others think about it. So fine. You won't be left without any resource for things you think needs to be done. I mean not everybody uses the 5 per thousand for a cause they care about. If you don't say anything, the state gives it to the Church. The important thing is you know and have control over what they do with *your* money. At least the people who are capable of knowing do. The majority of the population will not bother even if they can have a say over the 1000 per thousand of their taxes. Whereas it's very important to decide what to do with money. Today, governments use it for all sorts of plunder. It all ends up with money. You cut out the money, you make a blow to their livelihood. You control the money, you control the government. At least up to a certain point. Otherwise, the government controls you. They play the tune and you have to be their monkey to dance to their tune. If you are the one to pay, you at least get to play the tune. Here, I gave you the idea. And I don't even want money for it. Just put it to action.”

H.L. Mencken said "Democracy is a pathetic belief in the collective wisdom of individual ignorance."

I agree and I add that everything starts in the wrong direction in the world. The government makes the laws, “Strive and change it if you don't like it,” they say. When you bow your head to fighting God knows how many levels

of bureaucracy and idiocracy, you have lost from the start. One cannot, should not have to spend a lifetime dealing with all these stupidities. I mean I would be willing to sacrifice my life for it, the thing is, there are tens, hundreds, thousands, millions of such things, it would take billions of lives devoted to the cause to make any sense of the world the way things work at this moment. "One never runs out of alternatives in democracies," our literature teacher used to say. Actually you do. Man is exhausted.: from trying to jump the barriers that are continuously set up in front of him. You reach a point where you see there is no point in going on. If it wasn't so, there wouldn't be any just war either. "Change your governor, see we've put something like an election, you hold the power," they say. There is no such thing. Such a big monster doesn't change with one person. I, you, we don't stand a chance. None, full stop. Citizenship is a club we're grabbed and dragged into the moment we are born.

Like family...

Not like family, you can leave your family. At least when you grow up enough and can take care of yourself.

You can get out of citizenship.

That is in rare countries like America. And even so, they do not exempt you from taxes, they don't take off their dirty hands off of you even if you leave. Citizenship is such a club that we do not almost have any chance to get out of with the current "laws." Seriously, most countries, including Turkey do not allow you to leave. They allow it only after you take the citizenship of another country, guaranteeing that you are a member of another club. (For the sake of preventing you from becoming stateless. Or more correctly for them not to be left without citizens!) I can even divorce the man I have chosen as a grown-up, but I cannot divorce my country I didn't choose. They betrothed me in the cradle, I'm married the moment I am born, there is a condition that I be married to someone else before I can be

divorced, it's out of the question that I am single. Is there such despotism? If I necessarily have to be a member of one club, I need to choose the club I want to join. They have to make an effort to earn my citizenship. Offering me appealing products, commodities, laws, ways of living.

Plus, is there such discrimination? "You were born here, you can go in here; ah you were born there, you cannot go in yonder." It's decided at the start. Without even having a look at who I am. First, you have to ask "Can I go there?" and you're accepted only if they deign to give you a visa after going over your file. That is, the world is not open to everybody at the start. Whereas, it should be open to everybody. Later, if someone is causing a disturbance somewhere, being a burden on society, then s/he should be kicked out. You'll say it takes money to send people back to their original countries. I'll say "My dear, it takes much more money to police to keep people out of a certain imaginary boundary." I tell you, everything starts from the wrong end in this world, functions in reverse.

Yesterday a friend said "Sometimes I feel like the guy driving on the wrong lane of the road and when he hears the warning announcement on the radio that there is a car driving on the wrong lane says "What one, what one? All of them are driving on the wrong lane." I don't feel like that guy, I am the very guy himself. I mean if you were wondering who that was... But sshhh, don't tell anybody my secret!

Update

At Rome Airport...

Again we went and asked to be searched by hand without going through the detectors. First they said "It's not possible." As you know that is the standard answer. Then they went to talk with somebody and came back to say

“Okay but we will be conducting a thorough search, if that is fine with you...”

My husband said “Fine” on my behalf. I said fine too of course, just adding “Now they're going to search us so bad that they're going to make us regret it.” *But let's go ahead and see.*

The first thing the man said was to take off our shoes. *Right. As they cannot be hand-searched.* I replied “I cannot go around the airport barefoot.”

“They're going to give you galoshes,” said my husband. *Fine then.* The man asked if I could get the baby on my lap. She is not a baby anymore, she is a child. But of course I can get her. I said “Si,” put on the galoshes and embraced Lara. The man said “Follow me.”

They had not made us take off our shoes last time. But this time they didn't get our ID's, our information. It just shows how random things go. Okay, this was more thorough alright. Nothing like a cavity search even though the woman sort of went inside my pants. The woman said to Lara “Let's give a massage to mamma.” Probably not to scare her when her mother was being searched, to make an innocent explanation. At that moment, I thought it was a nice idea. *Things come back to you in unexpected ways...*

When we were done and reunited with my husband, he told me how this assistant, who he said was from the south judging from his accent, asked my husband if he was a lawyer. Because he was quoting regulations and years. *A bit of knowledge helps. Saying things with self-confidence.* And it was nice to see a guy interested in learning about things. The assistant then asked “Are these regulations valid in Turkey?” My husband answered “No.” So the guy asked “Then what do you plan to do?” My husband replied, “We'll see.”

We'll see...

On the way back at Sabiha Gökçen Airport...

Let alone my fears coming true, it was so much better than I could have imagined. Perhaps it would have been different if it was Atatürk Airport, I don't know but...

As always, I asked my daughter to be searched without passing through the detector. "Okay," they said. "Do you have someone, your husband with you?"

"I do," I replied.

"We cannot take the children ourselves, someone will need to pass her to you over the barrier."

Carlo was busy loading the luggages on to the belt at that moment and he didn't pass Lara over to me in spite of my asking twice. When Lara was left standing there, she naturally wanted to walk to me through the door, the detector that is. I called to Carlo once again. At that moment, another young woman security officer remarked "I remind you that it is only a metal detector." She is trying to say that there is no harm for Lara to pass through. But she in no way had said it in a totalitarian and coercing tone like the woman in Copenhagen. The young woman I had asked first said "Don't force" to her colleague, "She doesn't want to." I cannot say how much I appreciated that. I wonder if there is such a regulation? I should have asked but I didn't meddle with it after getting what I wanted.

This was the entrance of the airport, there is of course the other checkpoint after the passport control. Perhaps the incident there was more interesting. Lara had passed beyond the loading tables and I was telling her to come to me. Thereat, a male security officer seeing her said "Ah how cute you are, come over here." In all modesty, my daughter is really cute. But I had not expected a security officer to be so warm as if he was our closest friend. The guy took Lara in his lap, and my daughter went to him... Albeit, she didn't stay long, got down. This unexpected but quite sincere and humane approach was both surprising and nice, and at the same time strange. They have not lost their humanity. I felt like saying "Always stay like this, okay?"

12-13 million passengers might have chosen Copenhagen Airport but my choice is Sabiha Gökçen.

Epilogue:

A couple of days later at home... Lara asked for gloves. I handed her the oven gloves. She then said "Now Lara is going to massage mamma" and started touching my legs, going down. Then she said "Raise your arms." We burst out laughing with Carlo... But of course there is the unsound part of it. How does this kid perceive what's happening? Will she think that they're massaging her when they want to search her? Is this a good thing I have done, or is it wrong? *What about all the growing up new generation? Is it right to raise a generation from birth believing that it is "natural" to be searched on every entrance to an airport, on every entrance to a shopping mall, on every entrance to a government building? You involuntarily hard-wire fear in those brains.*

PART II

On Terrorism

She knew... Nobody would publish her writings. They would find her naive. The least. They would mock her. She was used to it. She had been shot down in flames/skinned alive in the groups she dared speak up her ideas. Nobody would dare say, let alone think of opting out of security all together. Maybe it was a happy-go-lucky philosophy. But it was a good one. No one could say the contrary. I mean they could and did, but they couldn't convince Ayşe it wasn't. That was what life supposed to be about: Happy-go-lucky. Had to be taken lightly a bit.

True, Schneier spoke against the “security”. But that was one thing. He was a security expert. A guru. People had high-esteem of him. Even then, there were many who did not agree with him and even blamed him saying that his kind of thinking was inexcusable and irresponsible.: It was dangerous to even get that idea in people's minds.

Ayşe had gone way past Schneier in criticizing “security” and asked for its abolishment. Plus, who was Ayşe? A nobody.

Still... Even though she wasn't sure she'd be published, she was going over the things she had written, trying to make sure they made sense. When she came to “The goal of terrorism is to terrify,” she got stuck. There was something wrong with that sentence but she just couldn't pin it down. Then, she got it. Was it really? This was a sentence she had heard, or rather read somewhere and repeated.: Because it sounded knowledgeable. *People are mostly an unthinking species. They repeat like parrots what they hear.* Ayşe believed she thought with her own mind. So even she was prone to this. That sentence was not true. She searched a bit. It was sentence generally attributed to Mao Tse Tung or Lenin, and so many people kept the same discourse going. Okay, even if not completely wrong, it was deficient. Terrorists did not kill to terrorize. They killed in order to get a political end. They, mostly, did not have anything personal against the lives they took. Just against the things they represented. The CIA analyst who led the hunt for Osama too had said “Islamic terrorists are against us because of what we do, not who we are...if we did not attack them, then their leadership would have trouble persuading their followers that they need to die attacking the American way of life.”

Then she realized another thing. Terrorism was an anesthetic word. When one used the word terrorist, you didn't feel the need to ask why the “terrorist” was doing what s/he was doing. You knew the answer apriori: s/he

was doing it because s/he was a bad person. When you do not go deep down to analyse the reason behind the actions of the opposite party, you can't go nowhere. There is no empathy, there is no sympathy.

Then what about the actions of Pol Pot? Am I supposed to feel empathy and sympathy for his actions too? Or for the actions of all the tyrants of this world whose numbers are so many that even God forgot the exact number or cannot really keep track of!

Well... I don't have sympathy for my tenant who doesn't pay her rent. And she didn't even kill or harm anybody I loved. Albeit, I had empathized with her. Until she showed she didn't care to bother about my needs and rights. Until she evaded me and when she responded did so insolently. Why should I feel or show sympathy for pathetic people bombing someplace randomly?

Yes, that's right too. But let me remind you, you had said "What people need to get deeply incised in their minds is that nobody, understand, NOBODY blows himself up for pleasure."

Ah yes, that's different. If somebody is harming himself, if he goes as far as destroying himself, I think there is something serious there and needs to be listened. I mean if my tenant attempted to burn herself and her daughter, I'd probably have said "Okay okay, you don't need to pay rent, live in my place." Suicide bombers... Think of their despair... Probably accompanied with anger, but they certainly must be in real despair.

But some – there are so many such men among certain societies- see this as a game. Playing bombing is a part of their masculinity. They do not sacrifice their lives for a cause, because of a grieving.

So you say some people use them as a cat's paw? A typical discourse.

May be typical but it's true.

Could be true of course. But it's not so right to label.

Deal. Let's not generalize but accept that there is such a fact.

As the most “famous” act of terrorism Ayşe went into reading about 9/11. In an interview with Al-Jazeera television in October 2001, Osama Bin Laden said the following which Ayşe was inclined to agree completely.

“The killing of innocent civilians, as Americans and some intellectuals claim, is really strange talk. Who said our children and civilians are not innocent, and that shedding their blood is justified? That is lesser in degree? When we kill their innocents, the entire world from west to east screams at us, and America rallies its allies and agents, and the sons of its agents. Who said our blood is not blood, but theirs is? Who made this pronouncement? Who has been getting killed in our countries for decades? More than one million children, more than one million children have died in Iraq and others are dying.”

Then Bin Laden went on to say “Why do we not hear someone screaming or condemning, or even someone's words of consolation or condolence?”

That was not true. Of course there were many people screaming and condemning what the US did. Not everybody reacted only when they killed Americans.

“How come millions of Muslims are being killed? Where are the experts, the writers, the scholars and the freedom fighters, where are the ones who have an ounce a faith in them? They react only if we kill American civilians, and every day we are being killed, children are being killed in Palestine. We should review the books. Human nature makes people stand with the powerful without noticing it.”

Is there truth in that? Does human nature really make people stand with the powerful without noticing it?

Might be. But there are so many people who stand by the weak and dispossessed too.

“In the past, an Arab king once killed an ordinary Arab

man. The people started wondering how come kings have the right to kill people just like that. Then the victim's brother went and killed the king in revenge. People were disappointed with the young man and asked him, 'How could you kill a king for your brother?' The man said, 'My brother is my king.' We consider all our children in Palestine to be kings."

I agree with this wholeheartedly. My dearest is my king. Who is to object?

In the "Letter to the American people" in November 2002, Bin Laden said "America does not understand the language of manners and principles, so we are addressing it using the language it understands."

Everybody absolves himself and the things he has done somehow. Be it right, be it wrong.

"We also advise you to pack your luggage and get out of our lands. We desire for your goodness, guidance, and righteousness, so do not force us to send you back as cargo in coffins."

No comment...

In another interview in 2004, he said:

"And as I was looking at those towers that were destroyed in Lebanon, it occurred to me that we have to punish the transgressor with the same, and that we had to destroy the towers in America, so that they taste what we tasted and they stop killing our women and children.

"Thinking people, when disaster strikes, make it their priority to look for its causes, in order to prevent it happening again.

"As for those who condemned these operations looked at the event [9/11] in isolation and failed to connect them to past events and did not look at the causes that lead to this result. So their point of view is narrow."

So, is his point of view wide?

Bin Laden said “This is contrary to Bush's claim that we hate freedom. Let him tell us why we did not strike Sweden, for example.”

Yeah, why? Why did they not strike anywhere else but America?

Because their dispute is with them. Whoever you interact with, whoever you have a conflict of interest with, that's who you fight with. If you keep your head down, generally nobody messes with you.

Bin Laden also said he could have flown planes into football stadiums or concerts if he wanted to kill more people. Twin Towers was an economical target, Pentagon obviously a military one. He said “They rip us of our wealth and of our resources and of our oil. Our religion is under attack. They kill and murder our brothers. They compromise our honor and our dignity and dare we utter a single word of protest against the injustice, we are called terrorists. ... The truth is that the whole Muslim world is the victim of international terrorism, engineered by America at the United Nations. We are a nation whose sacred symbols have been looted and whose wealth and resources have been plundered.”

Then he went on to say “We swore that America wouldn't live in security until we live it truly in Palestine.”

“I swear that America won't enjoy security before we live it for real in Palestine.”

“I swear by God the Great, America will never dream nor those who live in America will never taste security and safety unless we feel security and safety in our land and in Palestine.”

He doesn't need to swear to that. I doubt it is possible anyway. When there is no peace in one place, there should be no peace in any other place in the world. When our finger aches, is our body whole?

Osama said “Did you honestly expect us to sit back for

fifty years and watch you bomb our lands?”

Doesn't everybody have a right to defend himself? On the other hand... Is any violence legitimate?

In the Time magazine interview- December 1998, he said: “Any thief or criminal or robber who enters another country in order to steal should expect to be exposed to murder at any time.”

Again, are we coming to human nature? Is he wrong??

Yes he is. That's too simplistic. You cannot say “Ah you killed us, so we come and kill you.” It doesn't work that way.

But it does.

No, it doesn't. Killing is wrong.

They justify it with “They started it.”

If you go into that, there is no end. You did this. But ah you did that. This blame game never ends.

No, not really. Like Gandhi said, “An eye for an eye, makes the whole world blind.” Needs to end somewhere. Somebody has to stop.

We fought wars over religion in Europe. We were all Christians. The fire will kindle if you blow wind to it.

Bigness may never begin unless it begins with you. Trouble is, everybody expects and waits for the opposite party to begin the bigness. They fear, that if they begin bigness, they will be attacked. So when it comes to attacking not many wait for the other party, they want to be the first. Maybe that is the problem.

“In today's wars, there are no morals,” said Bin Laden.

Is there morals in war? Is war moral?

At least there is a moral code. War is justified ONLY after all peaceful alternatives are exhausted. It is the last resort. So says the just war theory.

But can there ever be a last? Who decides that move is supposed to be the last? There are always peaceful options.

Because you could always try another peaceful method before resorting to war. Try again and again. As the political scientist Michael Walzer has said, "Lastness, is never actually reached in real life: it is always possible to do something else, or to do it again, before doing whatever it is that comes last." And as Peter Steinfels added in the New York Times article "One more diplomatic initiative, one more peace conference, one more appeal to world opinion, one more nonmilitary form of pressure -- the last resort is always just over the horizon."

But in real life, you do not have so many alternatives. You try and try and then reach a point where you realize there is no point in trying to deal with peaceful methods. That it doesn't work, that the other side is not willing to cooperate. It is difficult to be an absolute pacifist. Especially when you feel you are so much in the right, the one doing the wrong is harming you and you want revenge and you know that you cannot get anywhere by lawful methods... You have to use some common sense and be practical. Make use of your experience and wisdom if you have any. The trouble comes here... There is always someone who disagrees with anything anybody does, the point of his decision. Opinions and judgements are personal.

"We believe the worst thieves in the world today and the worst terrorists are the Americans," went on Bin Laden. "We do not have to differentiate between military or civilian. As far as we are concerned, they are all targets."

Then he said, "Neither I had any knowledge of these attacks nor I consider the killing of innocent women, children, and other humans as an appreciable act. Islam strictly forbids causing harm to innocent women, children, and other people. Such a practice is forbidden ever in the course of a battle. ... I have already said that we are against the American system, not against its people, whereas in these attacks, the common American people have been killed."

He said so in one place, in another place he claimed: “However, this prohibition of the killing of children and innocents is not absolute. It is not absolute. There are other texts that restrict it. I agree that the Prophet Mohammed forbade the killing of babies and women. That is true, but this is not absolute. There is a saying, 'If the infidels killed women and children on purpose, we shouldn't shy away from treating them in the same way to stop them from doing it again.' The men that God helped [attack, on September 11] did not intend to kill babies; they intended to destroy the strongest military power in the world, to attack the Pentagon that houses more than 64,000 employees, a military center that houses the strength and the military intelligence.”

When asked about the towers, he said “The towers are an economic power and not a children's school. Those that were there are men that supported the biggest economic power in the world. They have to review their books. We will do as they do. If they kill our women and our innocent people, we will kill their women and their innocent people until they stop.”

Victims of Wrong Classification

This we-you thing... I seriously find it hard to identify with any group. But I guess I am the “strange” one here. If you are/ If I am to identify with anyone, the one to identify with should be the innocents that die on both sides, should be against the ones who oppress and kill those people. Why is it that Americans are on one side and Muslims on the other? Perhaps we all are victims of these wrong “side” divisions, wrong classifications. Just like in planes, as it is easy to make searches at one point, it is easy to categorize people according to those born within a certain border or belonging to a certain religion. Otherwise, how can you

bracket good Americans with good Muslims and separate filthy Americans and filthy Muslims? That's a bit difficult.

War Against Killing

Then there is the other side of the coin. If Bin Laden is the symbol of revenge, let's take a look at the symbol of forgiveness: The leader of Tibetan Buddhism, the 14th Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso. We learn from the article "Dalai Lama suggests Osama bin Laden's death was justified" by Mitchell Landsberg published in the LA Times May 4th, 2011:

When asked about the assassination of the Al Qaeda leader, the Dalai Lama said "As a human being, bin Laden may have deserved compassion and even forgiveness. But, forgiveness doesn't mean forget what happened. (...) If something is serious and it is necessary to take counter-measures, you have to take counter-measures." He personally practices compassion. He even does not kill mosquitoes, watching them swell with blood as they suck his blood. *Of course not always, when there is no danger of malaria and when his mood is good! That is, even Dalai Lama's toleration for mosquitos is up to a point. Up to this point.*

And then, this raises the question: Who is the mosquito that bites and requires to be killed in this equation? America or Osama? "There are American troops in the Middle East, in Central America, in Africa. What are they doing in these places? Why did they go overseas?" people ask.

I wonder if mosquitoes would ever think of attacking humans just to take revenge... Would they say "Oh they kill us, let's go over as an army and suicide bomb them." Would they have this sense of "us" and "them"? I mean at least they would have a point. They are different animals than we humans. They would not be differentiating by the

borders, artificial borders we were born in, religion or race.

Osama said “Nothing could stop you except perhaps retaliation in kind.” *Isn't that true too?*

He said “You have no right to object to any response or retaliation that reciprocates your own actions.” *Isn't that true too?*

Of course all these being true does not that make Osama the good person in the war. “The pieces of the bodies of infidels were flying like dust particles. If you would have seen it with your own eyes, you would have been very pleased, and your heart would have been filled with joy.” It's hard to say someone who says such things is a good person. Osama probably did not really care for the dying and the poor and the dispossessed either. He was just using it as an excuse to get at America. They were two gangs, trying to exploit the lands of the Earth. Each used the other's atrocity to justify its own atrocity. *I remember this from one place! My mother and father. We were the one's left in between, the one who paid the price of their fight. The children. So it is probably very similar. Just on a much larger scale.*

Both talk the same language. And that's not a language of understanding. Both make good points, as well as accusatory and wrong points. And it is made as if you have to be either on one side or the other. Well... To me, I don't want to be on either side. I don't want to be made to choose the least bad between two bads that almost weigh the same on the scale. They are both to blame, both to be condemned. They are the ones causing all this suffering and profiting from it. The ordinary people do the dying. *Or living in conditions worse than dying.*

Have a closer look at the politicians speeches. Most are assaulting, traumatizing, molesting... “Every faction in Africa calls themselves by these noble names Liberation-this, Patriotic-that, Democratic Republic of something-or-other. I guess they can't own up to what they usually are --

Federation of Worse Oppressors Than the Last Bunch of Oppressors. Often, the most barbaric atrocities occur when both combatants proclaim themselves freedom fighters.” *This quote from Lord of War is so true.*

Again in Lord of War, it says “You know who's going to inherit the earth? Arms dealers. Because everyone else is too busy killing each other. That's the secret to survival.”

And I add, security systems developers.

What is terrorism anyway?

Simply put by Wiktionary, it is “violence against civilians to achieve military or political objectives.” “to create an emotional response through the suffering of the victims in the furtherance of a political or social agenda.”

In short, it is violence, it is a psychological strategy of war... for gaining political or religious ends. “A psychological strategy of war for gaining political or religious ends by deliberately creating a climate of fear among the population of a state.”

The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, 4th Edition defines it as “The unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence by a person or an organized group against people or property with the intention of intimidating or coercing societies or governments, often for ideological or political reasons.”

The GNU version of the Collaborative International Dictionary of English defines it as “The practise of coercing governments to accede to political demands by committing violence on civilian targets; any similar use of violence to achieve goals.”

So by definition, governments are not and cannot be terrorists I suppose.

Oh no, terrorism comes from the French word *terrorisme* meaning “great fear,” which in turn came from the Latin *terrere* meaning “to frighten.” It was first used at

the end of the 18th century to refer to state terrorism, intimidation policies of the the government against its citizens. But yes, it has changed its historical meaning, Nowadays it is mostly considered the exact opposite. Even though there is something called the state terrorism too, some people do not accept it. They see it that the state cannot terrorize, that by definition terrorism is done against a government. Terrorism is considered criminal. When it comes to governments terrorizing, it is self-defense. They look through the prism of war and see governments (the ones they approve of course) as just.

Yeah, in the case of governments, they identify the enemy, they define what is illegal, they classify morals, they crucify you by their “justice” system and write all these ideological programs in the brains of youth through education and propaganda. No wonder most people trust and believe in them.

Really, what was terrorism? Scholars had studied and written books analyzing more than a hundred definitions, and years later had still not reached an adequate definition. UN had tried to define it too. But they couldn't agree completely. The main features of terrorism were that it had political, ideological, economical, social, or religious goals, done to instill fear and it was a violent act on civilians. Terrorism was the arbitrary killing of people in order to force them into subjugation or defeat.

In the end, she gave up on definitions. There was no point. Who used words according to their definitions anyway? Terrorism was an emotionally charged judgemental word. *So, a good word for manipulation by politicians.* That was it. Terrorism was condemned, it was a damned word. It depended on who you sympathized with.

What distinguished which party was the terrorist when both were fighting cruelly? “One man's terrorist is another

man's freedom fighter" was born from that fact. However, it was misleading. The freedom fighter could have a very just, very legitimate cause but still be the terrorizer. We were going back to the beginning. People used words as insults, as manipulation, depending on which side they were on; not according to their real meanings. Lately, many news agencies have given up using the term. If they had bombed a place, saying "bombers" made sense and was most precise.

The word terrorism was probably created for propaganda. Or that's what it was mostly used for today. To justify your ends. When you called someone a terrorist, you didn't need to address the motivation for the act of terror and take action to prevent that motivation. No, you addressed the deed. They've hurt you, so you have the right to use force. You kill innocents on the ground of "defending" against terrorism. You wage war. Which is fine. It's your natural right. Your soldiers are heroes, brave men. Terrorists are the bad guys. *What kind of a logic is that? Sorry, but soldiers are terrorists too if they're not playing soldiers with other "fighters."*

What about Nagasaki and Hiroshima? How can a country who did that complain about 9/11? How do you still find the right in yourself to accuse anybody as terrorists? I mean sorry, with all due respect, I do not blame anybody for what their ancestors did on a personal level... But as a government, if you do not first acknowledge and condemn what you have done beforehand, you do not have any right to even "defend" yourself when somebody does the same thing to you. Estimates vary, but there were about 200,000 people who died there. Compared to about 3,000 in 9/11. I know some argue that more people would have died if the war had gone on, this forced the Japanese to surrender, saving many lives. Sorry, that's not an excuse! As Einstein said "when I later learned that the bomb had been created and was to be used against Japan, I did all in my power to avert President Truman from this plan, since publicly

dropping it on an empty island would have been sufficient to convince Japan or any nation to sue for peace.”

But there would be people who disagree with Einstein too. Saying it wouldn't have had the same effect. In fact, the Japanese government even tried to play down the aftermath of Hiroshima. Only after Nagasaki they couldn't deny it.

So it can be said that Al Qaeda was actually trying to save lives too by killing. Forcing America to get out of the east, thus preventing more killing.

You know Bin Laden used the same argument in his “letter to the American people.” He wrote “You who dropped a nuclear bomb on Japan, even though Japan was ready to negotiate an end to the war. How many acts of oppression, tyranny and injustice have you carried out, O callers to freedom?” On the other hand, I also know, for some people, for some reason, there is a difference between the atomic bombs and 9/11. Which I cannot see.

There is also the financial terrorism that the western world imposes on the poor countries. That is terrorism too.

I once upon a time was preparing a guideline for a revolution in language. To solve most of the common communication problems. Problems arise because people attach different meanings to the same words. The same word arise different feelings and connotations to two people. Just to make sure we are talking about the same thing, we need some simplification. We do it by dropping the terms that people interpret differently, giving even opposite meanings while uttering the same sound. Leads to confusion and arguments, doesn't do anybody any good. Terrorist and terrorism are among those words. *Actually, what is any of the -isms? They are abstract ideas which everybody identifies in a different way.*

Noam Chomsky has said “Wanton killing of innocent civilians is terrorism, not a war against terrorism.” The heart of the matter is... A rose is a rose, it would smell the

same with any other name. Killing a person is killing, and it stinks the same, whether you define it as terrorism or waging war against terrorism. Killing smells just as bloody and as awful be it terrorism or bringing democracy and freedom to another country. Einstein has said, "It is my conviction that killing under the cloak of war is nothing but an act of murder." *Please don't anybody dare object to this too!* Instead of declaring war upon terrorism, countries should declare war upon killing! How is that for an idea? :)

(The smiley is to show that this is a tongue-in-cheek remark, that I know it is naive. Of course that doesn't mean I don't mean it. I am dead serious with this suggestion.)

Of course it is a double dilemma. Declaring war upon killing doesn't, cannot mean you go and kill. You cannot kill the killer, then you would be declaring war upon yourself.

So maybe I repeat. Instead of declaring war upon terrorism, presidents of states should declare war upon killing!

Found Out Why!

As he was the one who coined the term "security theater" Ayşe felt she needed to read some Bruce Schneir.

Bruce Schneir quoted James Madison "If men were angels, no government would be necessary" and said "Not being angels is expensive."

Is it really? Does it have to be? Can't the money be spent on the non-angels to turn them into angels too instead of trying to immobilize them by building prisons, putting guards everywhere? Can't the money spent on trying to immobilize the non-angels by building prisons, putting guards everywhere be spent otherwise to turn them into angels too?

He also quoted philosopher Sissela Bok wrote: "...trust is a social good to be protected just as much as the air we

breathe or the water we drink. When it is damaged the community as a whole suffers; and when it is destroyed, societies falter and collapse."

Ayşe agreed with this completely. She hated living in this world where there was not much trust left. Schneir said "In the world today, levels of trust vary all over the map—although never down to the level of baboons." *Whereas I'd say we **are** mostly at the level of baboons!*

Reading, she came across an explanation about searching the pilots. "That's not for pilots, but for people pretending to be pilots," said Schneir. "As we cannot verify their identities, it's better to check everyone."

That's odd... I mean I guess someone verifies that they are the real pilots before handing the plane over to them, no? Why couldn't that be done at the security line? Besides, the former TSA screener was saying pilots were exempt from the liquid rule. Then how come this double standard? There probably was an information error somewhere. Or there were details that Ayşe did not know and could not find out.

Anyway... She went on reading and came across the answer to another one of her questions: Who writes these regulations, announcements, who makes these rules? People like Kip Hawley, the director of the Transportation Security Administration from 2005 to 2009. Of course not that Ayşe wanted a specific name, she wanted to know what kind of people they were.

Reading an interview between Hawley and Schneir, she found a direct answer to her question why dying on a plane was so horrifying to people when the same terrorist attack could take place in any other transportation. Schneier said

1) Planes were national symbols,

National symbol? Eh, so what?

2) They were a common and important vehicle deeply

embedded throughout economy, *Another "So what?" As if buses and trains and subways are not important, as if they have no economic value...*

3) They traveled to the distant places where terrorists were,
Bah! As if terrorists cannot travel and come to where you live. Or as if they may not be living in your country.

4) The failure mode was severe, that is a small bomb dropped the plane out of the sky and killed all.

Apart from the last one, the other answers did not mean anything to Ayşe. "So what?" she thought. Whereas Hawley agreed with Schneier on all these points and affirmed airplanes to be "high-profile" targets. Of course, that didn't mean they weren't working to protect other modes of travel.

Ayşe also found out that four boxes of matches were okay but not five. That didn't make any sense at all as you could have one more person get four boxes of matches and have eight instead of five so easily. Lighters were not okay until August 2007. Then they were allowed. Hawley admitted that confiscating lighters had been a waste because terrorists could ignite bombs with batteries. *And matches... duh! And they realized this after so many years?!...* Actually not that many, they were banned only for two years, from 2005 to 2007. Hawley even said that taking lighters away was security theater. That it trivialized the security process. *So he used that expression himself!*

More important of all... Ayşe found out why we were made to take off shoes. *There was a shoe-bomber!* Right after 9/11. He had hidden a bomb in the heel of the shoe and was trying to light a match to blow it but because of his sweat or for some other thing, the bomb didn't work and the passengers restrained him. A doctor administered a tranquilizer he found on the medicine cabinet and the plane diverted to another airport.

We are no longer made to take off our shoes. Nobody

really does that, at least not as a standard procedere, at least over here in Europe. Even in America, they had relaxed with the kids. Children under 12 did not have to take off their shoes. (as of 2011.) You know it helps to be informed. Like the guy asking “Are you a lawyer sir?” Nobody really bothers with this stuff. They tell us something, we obey. Had she known this before, Ayşe would have objected to Lara's shoes being taken off. And we were made to take off our shoes just because we asked to opt-out. Had Ayşe known this beforehand, she would have asked the man “How much explosive do you think I have stuffed in the heels of these tiny shoes to destroy the airplane?”

She found out liquids started being prohibited after the British police had discovered a plot to blow planes using liquids. The liquid bomb “terror” plot had changed the baggage check procedures at airports overnight. Ayşe was travelling at the time, she remembered all the commotion and her surprise when hearing she had to toss her bottle of water. “But why?” she had asked, but had dutifully obeyed of course. That was 2006. The deputy commissioner had claimed that it would have caused “mass murder on an unimaginable scale...” had it been carried out. However, chemists said it was a stupid plot, it wouldn't have worked. Hawley said that you couldn't really combine liquids less than three-ounce to make a bomb. Okay. So Ayşe learnt. It was good to read about the “logic” of the other side. Even though you couldn't be sure if it made sense.

Former British Ambassador to Uzbekistan Craig Murray had said “None of the alleged terrorists had made a bomb. None had bought a plane ticket. Many did not even have passports, which given the efficiency of the UK Passport Agency would mean they couldn't be a plane bomber for quite some time.” Whereas someone else said they had bought tickets. But they were return tickets. The claimed “terrorists” had young families, were liked in the

community. One even got caught on CCTV buying cakes for his father's confectionary business and chatting with the owner; implying this is not the psychology of someone about to blow himself up. Upon which somebody had mocked this commenter saying "Yeah, terrorists just go to the counter and ask for a one-way ticket, saying 'No, no luggage. Just me and my Qur'an.'"

You don't know who and what to believe.

That's right. But passports and tickets are the last thing anyway. They plotted, they were going to take down ten planes in a couple of days.

No, they had not made any bomb! That's for sure. They were just sitting and talking. Somebody called them "wannabe terrorists." The police finds some notes in a "terrorist" house, and start "prophecy trials." They figure out people's intentions and try to persecute them based on notes, not action.

Yes but you cannot wait until they kill and do the damage and then put people behind bars.

And do you know the aftermath, what has been the result of the trials? Only the leader of the "terrorists" they caught was charged with conspiracy to blow up an airplane and he was completely acquitted in court!

No, he wasn't. The jury failed to reach a verdict on that charge. But then, again there's another twist. There were other courts and trials. The second jury found three people guilty. Then another jury convicted some more of plot to murder.

It's all ambiguous, there is so much uncertainty. The more you read, the more confused you become instead of being enlightened. Even if it was certain, who is to say other things did not interfere, some people did not influence those decisions? In the end, we ended up paying for all this, by having to dump our stuff. Think of all the waste!

You don't think of waste when there is a threat to so

many lives.

The question is this: Is there really a threat to lives? Maybe it really was, is an apocryphal plot. That's probably why they seem to have relaxed on the liquids. They no longer bother about the little bit in the bottle that I leave thinking I'd be drinking it up if they say anything. Even if it is not written anywhere explicitly that we can carry on liquids, lately they do not say anything.

Then there was the "Underwear Bomber." A 23 year-old Nigerian man hid plastic explosives in his underwear on a flight to US on the Christmas of 2009. A Dutch passenger restrained him with others helping. Upon which, the Secretary of Homeland Security said "The system worked." *Of course why should she consider and emphasize the fact that the airport security did not work?* Only when people criticized, and the next day a journalist asked if the system failed miserably, she said "Yes, it did." *He got on the plane in Amsterdam... So it wasn't actually them being responsible, still...* In the end, as in the case of the shoe-bomber, it was the passengers disarming the assailant.

The underwear bomber was the son of a banker and businessman, one of the richest men in Africa. He was the youngest of 16. The father was suspicious and went to the US Embassy to tell on his son about a month before the incident.

And what did they come up with as a security measure after this incident? I guess the body scanners. Schneier describes how this plays out: "We screened for guns and bombs, so the terrorists used box cutters. We confiscated box cutters and corkscrews, so they put explosives in their sneakers. We screened footwear, so they tried to use liquids. We confiscated liquids, so they put PETN (Pentaerythritol tetranitrate) bombs in their underwear. We rolled out full-body scanners, even though they would not have caught the Underwear Bomber, so they put a bomb in a printer

cartridge. We banned printer cartridges over 16 ounces—the level of magical thinking here is amazing—and surely in the future they will do something else.”

It seems so. There is no rational risk evaluation when coming up with these rules and “forbidden” items. Fear runs free. Like the Spanish say, *el miedo es libre*. (Meaning “Fear is free.”) There doesn't need to be an explanation for fears, we are entitled to them even if irrational. I'd say we are not, or rather they are not entitled to enforce them down MY throat!

Schneier also used a term “CYA security”, short for Cover Your Ass security. That probably was the reason behind it all. These people, authorities that is, did not want to be blamed if anything happened. If they came up with these procedures, they could say “We did our best.”

Upton Sinclair has said "It is very difficult to get a man to understand something when his salary depends on his not understanding it." Unfortunately, most bureaucrats salaries depend on their not solving problems in the most efficient manner. *What's more, it's not only their salary, it's their very existence that depends on it.*

By the way, there was no bomb used in 9/11. They went into the cockpit and got control over the plane smashing it into the towers. Now, the cockpits had a security valve that didn't allow the door to be opened without the pilot's command. And oddly enough, in March 2015, a suicidal co-pilot took advantage of the pilot leaving for a pee break, crashing the plane on the French Alps. They couldn't go into the pilot cabin exactly due to the “security” measure they took. It proved to be something very insecure and deadly for the 150 people who died in that crash.

Of course, after the fact, came regulations that there be two authorized personnel in the cockpit at all times.

Who knows what will happen next to make one more change to make things more secure when they find out,

despite everything, they still have not provided top security and there is yet another hole in their regulations. *The problem is... The hole is in human nature and the impossibility of getting through life “securely.” Unless they see that, nothing will change.*

At all costs?

Well... Even Schneier accepted that sometimes security theater helped. He came to this conclusion when friends had a baby. “The number of babies abducted from hospitals may be miniscule but the electronic bracelets lessen the parents' anxiety at such a joyful yet stressful time,” he reasoned.

Bah! I never had an anxiety of my baby being abducted. We didn't have electronic bracelets either. We simply do not have such things here.

Of course these things depend on the society you live in. Perhaps, in America, the cases of abductions is greater, or perhaps the hysteria around it is greater, or maybe it's only because there is more media attention, or it may even be due to one influential person shaping people's minds. These all go along with the level of prosperity and welfare too. You cannot expect a new mother to fear much about abduction in most of Africa as they have more important things to worry about. You cannot think of them coming with electronic bracelets as they have more important things to invest on.

It also depends on how society sees things. These kinds of “security” measures are for the emotional well-being of people. It lowers your, or rather the general public's feeling of threat. Which is not such a bad thing after all. Schneier too seems to be in favor of theater if it is a good one. However, TSA was bad theater. “Everyone sees what the TSA is doing is a joke,” he said. *Well... One should never use*

such generalizations. Everyone never sees anything eye to eye. Albeit, it is obvious most people take these searches quite seriously.

Schneier also said that people forgetting knives, guns, grenades (*Okay, it wasn't a real one but a detonated souvenir. Another but, the TSA didn't know that*), in their carry-ons didn't mean much because the point was not to block all but to have the “terrorists” worried about being caught. *Then why does he say it is bad theater?*

Red Teams tried to beat the system in order to improve it. Plus, they had the advantage of inside knowledge. The point was to catch the weak points and to come up with a particular corrective action. When TSA screeners screwed up, letting 20 of 22 prohibited items of the Red Team through, officials jumped up to find out who leaked that information to the press. Whereas, the correct thing would have been to concern themselves about “security”! They confiscate water bottles, toothpaste tubes, shampoos, which are easy, -like the towing away of cars not blocking traffic,- but let through guns and bombs.

As Schneier says, “if we can't keep weapons out of prisons, we can't keep them out of airplanes.” It's that simple.

Ayşe kept on reading. There were also cell phone guns. *So that's why we have to pass them through the x-ray too.* She read some more. Wine was a very flammable liquid and just one person could bring down a plane by setting a fire in the middle of the ocean where there was no place for the plane to make an emergency landing. So, as long as wine was sold at duty-frees people needed to fear the horror of being burnt to death... But for some reason, they didn't.

The Li in the batteries of laptops was flammable too, it burnt even under water. Break the battery in the toilet, voila, you get yourself a fire. It wasn't only the liquids, solids were dangerous too. So they needed to ban almost

everything, search everything.

Someone was teasing “Just wait until someone tries to strangle someone with his bare hands at an airport or on plane. Then they'll set up amputation stations at check-ins.” *That's exactly what they should be doing! Yes, exaggeration I know, but all this they're doing is no different an exaggeration.*

You cannot prevent all attacks. Full stop.

You cannot protect people from life. Semicolon;

The only way to protect people from life is to annihilate them at the beginning. Full stop.

So Hawley also admitted. “100 percent security is not realistic for a vast network spread around the world. We cannot protect everybody from everything, everywhere, all the time.” Yet, people do not seem to be conscious of this fact. Jeffrey Rosen has said it: “We have come to believe that life is risk free and that, if something bad happens, there must be a government official to blame.” It's not true you know!

Yes, but people demand that politicians address their fears and calm them. They need to be tranquilized. Especially after such an event.

I understand that. I felt very uneasy the week after a thief entered our house at night while we were sleeping. But I got over it. I still sometimes fear at night when I wake up, but hey, that's life, it's what it is.

What you don't understand is politicians can't say that! How can they not do anything? If one more thing happens, how will they account for it? How can they? They cannot. So it is a dilemma for them too. You have to accept.

Whereas the anchorman Charles Gibson said “Putting your child on a school bus or driving across a bridge or just going to the mall — each of these things is a small act of courage — and peril is a part of everyday life.” *How horrible is such a mind uttering those words! And he is in a position to influence so many. I once more feel bad for the world we*

live in. Maybe this is being stuck-up but seriously... Isn't it bad to instill such ideas in minds and draw such a mental map?

Ayşe was lost in thought once again... Most people were on the other side. Most people supported this “security” searches which Ayşe saw and defined as a “craze”. So most people would see and define her as the “nuts.” John Stuart Mill was right. **“Protection against the tyranny of the magistrate is not enough, there needs protection also against the tyranny of the prevailing opinion and feeling.”**

But then she discovered somebody. Somebody saying the same things she said. John Mueller. A professor of political sciences, was another prominent man talking against the TSA and the costs. Along with Mark G. Stewart, professor of civil engineering in Australia, he had written a paper called “Balancing the Risks, Benefits, and Costs of Homeland Security.” They made a list of what the government officials did to justify all the money they spend: 1- Focusing on worst case scenarios, 2- Adding, rather than multiplying, probabilities, 3- Assessing relative, rather than absolute, risk 4- Inflating the importance of potential terrorist targets, 5- Inflating terrorist capacities. Mueller and Stewart were even criticizing the very phrase “homeland security”, saying it was an inflated phrasing as well. It implied as if there was an existential threat to the whole country. In Canada they simply named it “public safety.” Without so much drama. *Right, we are storytelling creatures, if you exaggerate instead of defining the situation accurately, your reaction automatically changes accordingly. This is one of the most important ways to govern the public's reaction.*

A 23 year-old national intelligence officer for transnational threats at the CIA said "We must not take fright at the specter our leaders have exaggerated. In fact,

we must see jihadists for the small, lethal, disjointed and miserable opponents that they are." He added that Al-Qaeda had only a handful of individuals capable of planning, organizing and leading a terrorist organization, and its capabilities were far inferior to its desires.

Of course this may be a rhetoric to belittle the enemy.

Could be. Strong or weak, the important thing is that there is always an enemy. Now there is ISIS in the agenda. As long as there is an enemy, you can fuel fear. "Fear or stupidity has always been the basis of most human actions," Einstein has said. And we know that stupidity is boundless. So the only thing left is to keep up the fear environment.

Some call the threats "terror fairytales concocted by governments". They may not be so, they may be real... Still, it doesn't warrant this response. Let alone being turned into a police state, we are being, we have been turned into a police world without even realizing. This is like the frog in the hot pan. The water is cool when he jumps in, he is happy to refresh from the heat. But then the fire is going on underneath and he doesn't realize he's being boiled!

Mueller and Stewart also wrote a piece comparing witches, communists, and terrorists. Between 70,000 to a hundred thousand people, mostly women, but including priests and children were burnt at the stake in the three centuries between 1400-1700. For copulating with the devil, for eating babies. That's also where the flying on a broomstick with comes from.

Yeah, but they confessed their crimes.

Yes of course. Under torture...

During this insane period, some people tried to talk sense, but they didn't argue there weren't witches, they argued the outcome. They said that being burnt was too much of a punishment for being a witch!

Clark Kent Ervin, on the conversation on Cato Unbound,

accepted that “the number of targets is so large, the nature of intelligence is so inexact, and the odds are so stacked in the terrorists’ favor (homeland security defenders have to be perfect 100% of the time, while terrorists need to succeed only once), that any attempt to make ourselves absolutely invulnerable to terrorist attack is bound to fail.” Adding that reasonable people’s conclusion should and would not be “because we can’t do everything, we should do nothing.” Ervin thought that was a silly notion. Unfortunately, that was Ayşe’s conclusion: “It’s impossible to prevent, so don’t even attempt.” *Maybe she wasn’t so smart.* But to her, it was stupid to try to block one hole when it could burst in another place. What’s more, that hole was not being blocked either. Nuclear power and chemical plants were especially dangerous. Schools and hospitals and malls could and did get a share of the violence in the world on a random but regular basis. Ayşe was fatalistic maybe. In America, they believed in holding the power in their hands.

But there was someone thinking like her. Another woman. In the conversation on Cato Unbound, Veronique de Rugy said “considering the low probability event of a terrorist attack, and considering the fact that we don’t know what form it will take or where it will happen, it is likely that the most cost effective measure is to do nothing and then spend money to clean up and compensate the victims after the fact. In other words, rather than protecting all targets or even few targets with a high probability of failing, we should spend money mitigating the consequences of the attack.” But de Rugy was talking like an economist, as an economist. Whereas for Ayşe, it was about utility. She was all for using the money for a good purpose, not for putting it aside for clearing the debris of an attack. *Think of all the things that could have been done with that money.* Apparently somebody, Bjørn Lomborg, had done a cost-benefit analysis. *Which is not so difficult I guess...* The conclusion being only if only one fifth of the yearly budget was

redirected the lives of 1.5 million children could be saved. Of course not American ones, but still... Mueller and Stewart were saying that in such a case “the likelihood and consequences of such attacks would hardly change.”

Ayşe was not of the same opinion. She thought that the consequences of course not, but the likelihood of such attacks *would* change. She believed that the probability of those attacks would decrease. That people would protect them. “We are told that we should prepare for the worst and hope for the best no matter what the cost. It is bad policy, bad economics, and bad security,” said de Ruyg. Mueller was saying the same thing. To spend the money on fixing things up after something happens. *Who stands up to say that Governments should spend the money on making the world a better place for all and not only for yourself? Is that asking for too much, expecting too much? Spend money on being more likeable. So that people will not feel like attacking or killing you. ?? What do you say? Isn't that a reasonable option? Don't you think you would have got proponents if you spent all that trillion of dollars you did on the world? People would be propangading for you, not against you. There would be more people to give away anybody who wanted to do you any harm.*

Exceptions do not break the rule, everybody's basic wants are the same on this Earth: Health, two pieces of bread in their stomach, a roof over their head, a good future for themselves and their children, to know they are in safety (or to be free from fear we might say), and if possible the chance to improve one's self and get ahead in life. Yes, some want more money, is more greedy; some want to crush others, is more malevolent; some want power, is more ego-centrical. But you don't go anywhere without these basics. Economic development and welfare for everybody, not only for a nation, caring for the well-being of the one considered “the other” is the answer/solution to make this world a secure place. Not the security search shows at airports.

Sorry to say that... It's not so easy as passing people through metal detectors and their stuff through x-rays. But maybe it is much easier than that. (And has a much more satisfactory outcome.)

That's exactly what Muhammad Yunus, the Nobel Peace Prize winner said in his acceptance speech. "We must address the root causes of terrorism to end it for all time. I believe putting resources into improving the lives of poor people is a better strategy than spending it on guns." Ayşe didn't only believe in this, she was sure it was a better strategy. She didn't understand how politicians could not think of or see this.

I'm afraid it is not that they cannot think of or see it, it's that they do not want to really do anything about it. That is what keeps their pockets full, that is what makes them keep their positions of power. As Bastiat explained in his book *The Law*, "Plunder is plunder, whether done illegally by a robber who hopes to profit directly, or legally by a group of legislators who profit indirectly by thus maintaining their government jobs." *The trouble is, most of the time those legislators do not only profit indirectly but also with money going directly into their pockets.*

"You chose that person."

"I didn't choose that person."

"You voted and when the one you voted for ruled you chose that person."

"Wait a minute. You keep saying 'You chose' etc. I didn't. What if whoever I voted for never ruled?"

"How can you govern when you're in the minority?"

"That's what I'm asking you!"

"You want to govern yourself."

"Yes, exactly. I do. I plead guilty to that."

"You can never get along with anybody else. You can never say 'Okay, I concede, I get 80 % and you get 80 %.'"

"Wait, wait a minute. I can live with getting 80 %. I have been made to give up 99 %." After reflecting a second,

she corrects herself, “No, I've been made to give up myself almost completely! I have to live with all things I don't believe in. What more do you want me to give up?”

Thinking about the state of the world... How money and resources were spent, what people put their energy into... She wanted to get up and shout “Heeey, come to your senses!” Instead of spending money and resources and human energy on security, it was so simple and obvious that they be spent on bettering the lives of those in need. If governments didn't do it, people needed to make them do it.

Perhaps this was a reminder to herself. For not having spoken up at all and for having obliged to so much bullying just because she wanted to travel, just because she wanted to live with a man who was born outside of the border she was born in. She had wanted to get on with her life. That was it. She wanted to go about her business with as little hassle as possible, and for this preferred to “call the bear uncle” and move on. Knowing that that bear could make her life much harder than it was already making. That's how people were silenced. By a silent threat. *Government holds the monopoly on violence. At least legally.* Until people could no longer take it. The thing was not to push them to that point, and it was necessary to break both the non-silent and silent threats of governments. The whole world really needed a wake up call.

But a Dream...

Maverick philosopher had written “Fight the good fight against ignorance, evil, thoughtlessness, and tyranny, but don't sacrifice your happiness on the altar of activism. We are not here to improve the world so much as to be improved by it. It cannot be changed in any truly ameliorative and fundamental ways by our own efforts

whether individual or collective. If you fancy it can be, then go ahead and learn the hard way, assuming you don't make things worse.” Ayşe highlighted “We are not here to improve the world so much as to be improved by it.” This was an important point for her. She surely did not want to sacrifice her happiness on the altar of activism, or anything for that matter. However, she seriously didn't know how to not speak up.

Ayşe liked John Eliot's quote much better: “History shows us that people who end up changing the world are always nuts, until they are right, and then they are geniuses.”

She didn't want to be considered nuts, she had no desire to be a genius. All she desired was to live in a more decent world. In a more “logical” world. With people behaving more “reasonably.” As for the present world we lived in, like Joseph Addison who founded *The Spectator* magazine, she conceived it better to “live rather as a spectator of mankind than one of the species.” Given the way things were...

She kept on reading. That was her opium.: To carry her through time.

“Why do we have wars?” somebody had asked.

And somebody had answered the question: “Because we are ruled by an elite group of psychopaths who own the banks that control the governments and media. They fund both sides of war for profit and they manufacture the consent of the public through the propaganda of the media.”

Sounded a very reasonable and solid answer.

Keep reading, keep reading... There were plastic explosives. You could strap them to your leg and pass through the detectors undetected! She remembered the sentence she had written seven years before. “I don't want to live in a world where on one side methods of attack are developed and on the other side devices for implementing

security measures.” *I'm afraid that's exactly the world we are living in.* She didn't want to believe that it was real. It couldn't be real, given the absurdities of it all... She concluded, “This must be a dream. Life is but a dream...”

As Lewis Carroll also said, “Life, what is it but a dream?”

Ever drifting down the stream--
Lingering in the golden gleam--
Life, what is it but a dream?

